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THE NEW YORKER

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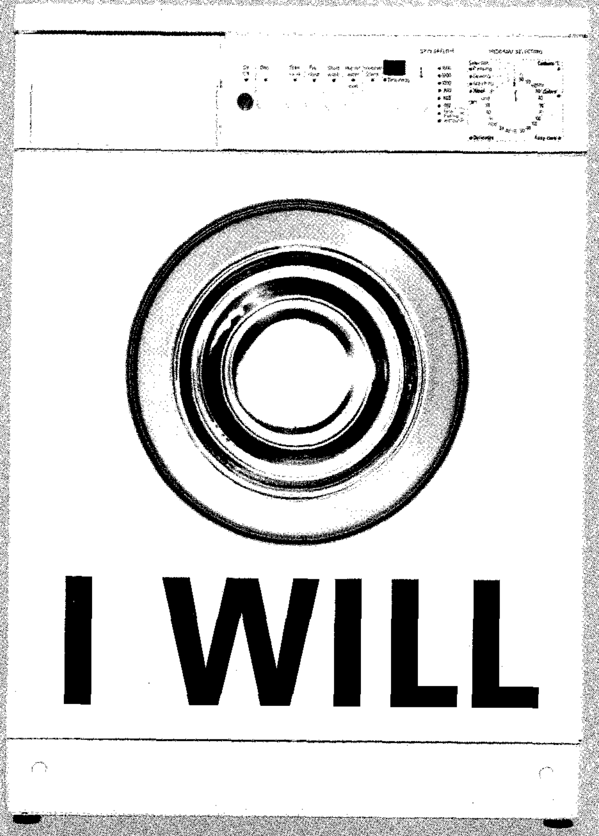

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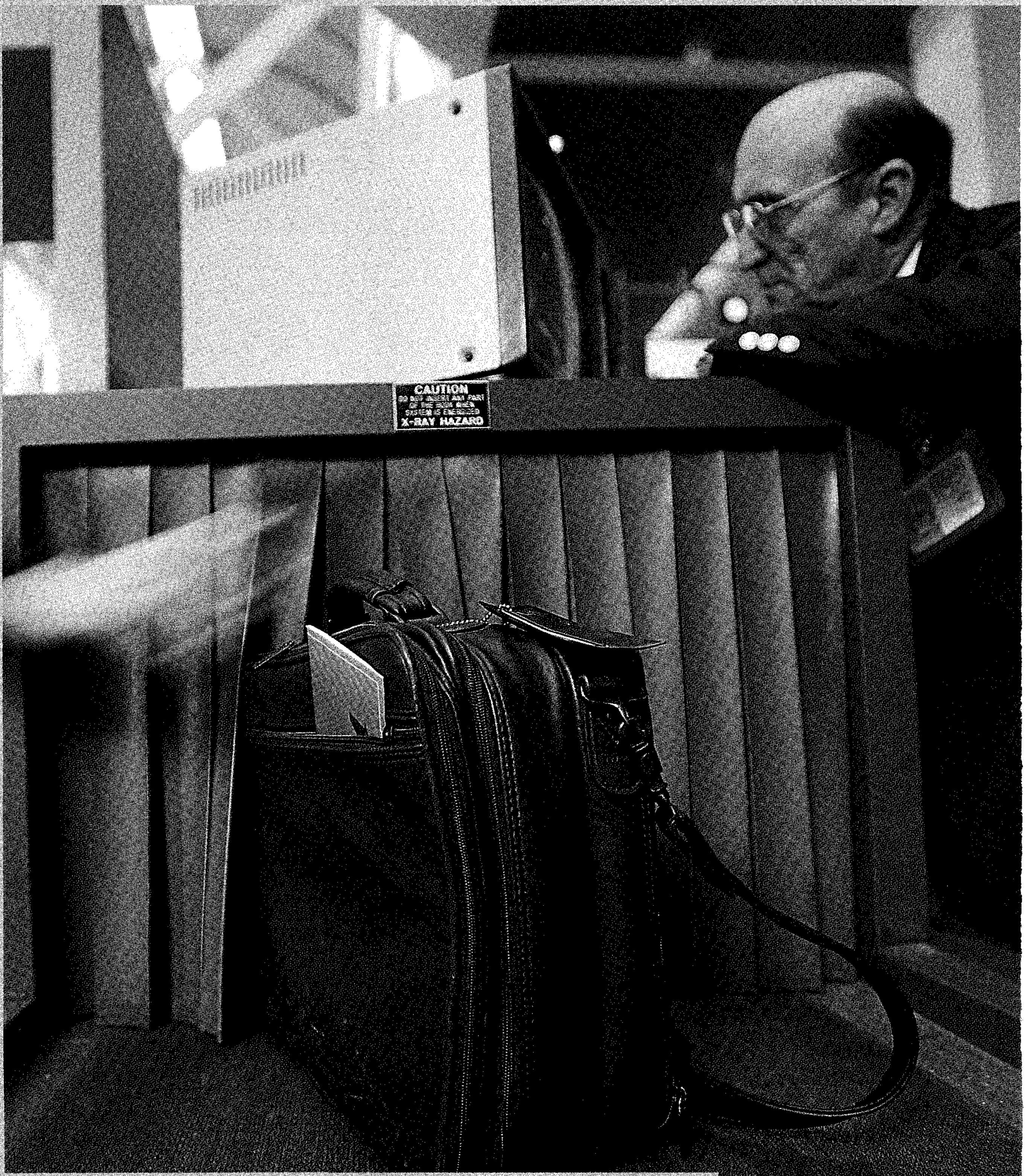

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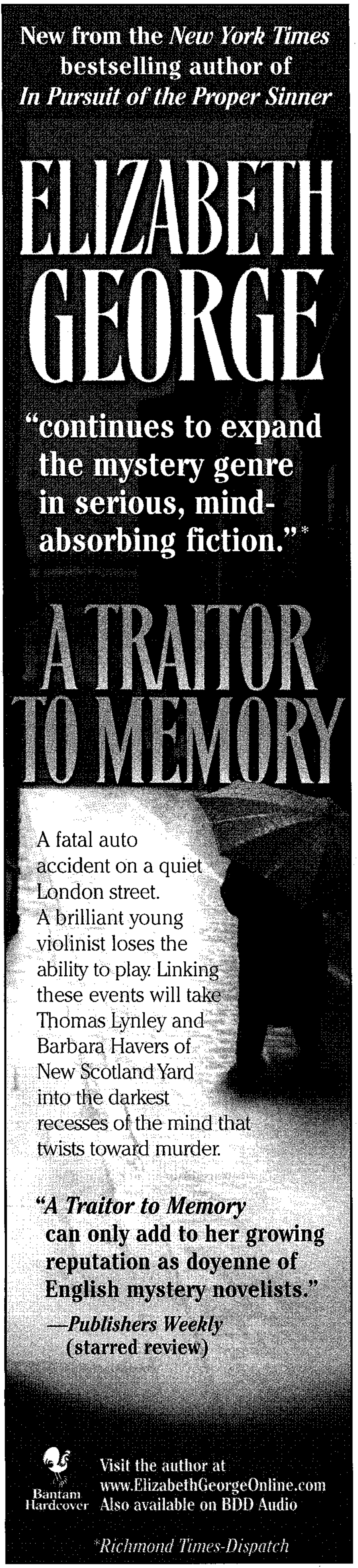

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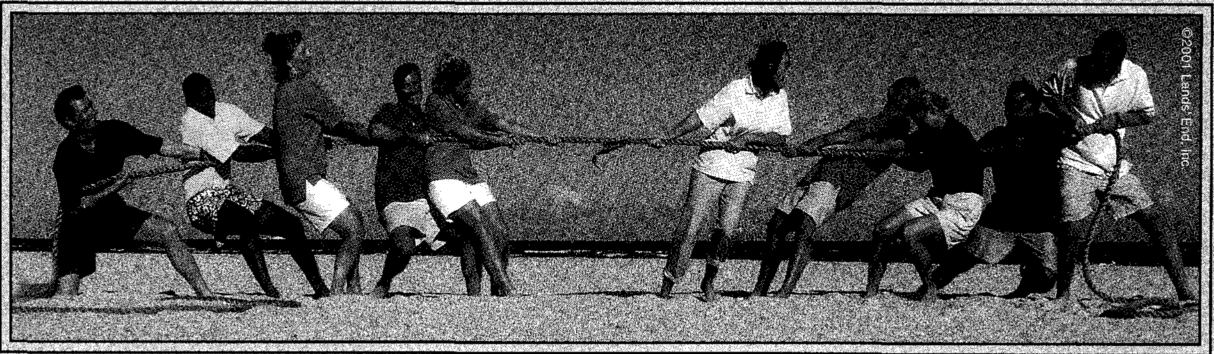
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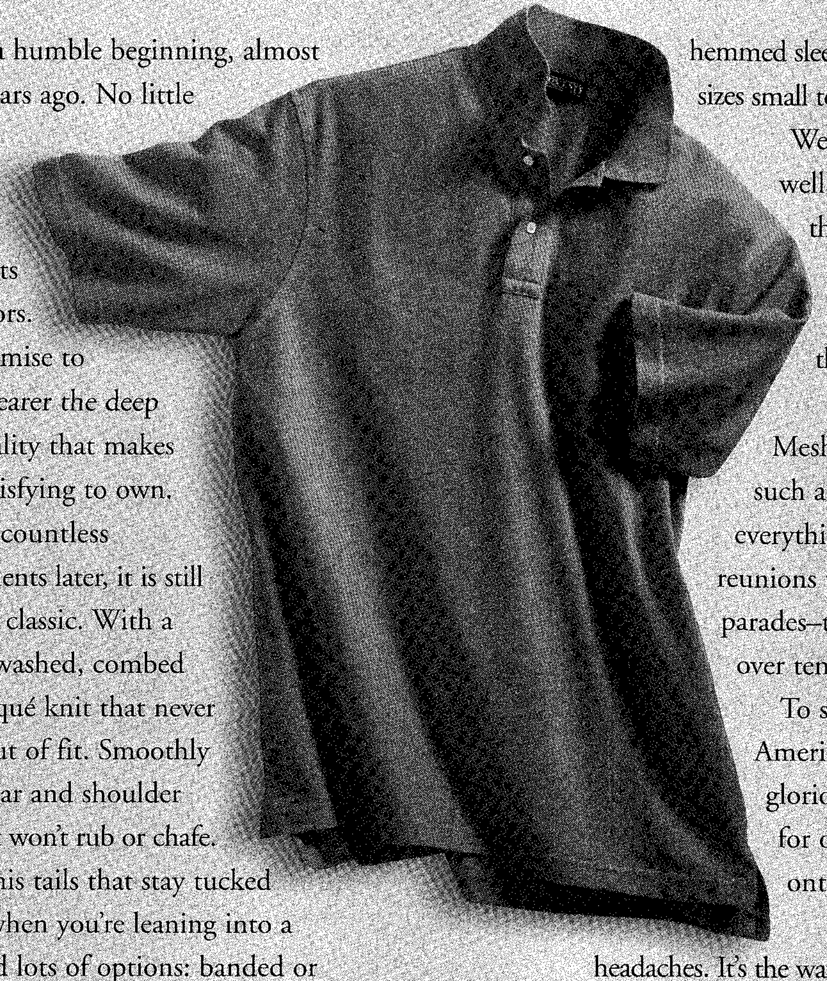

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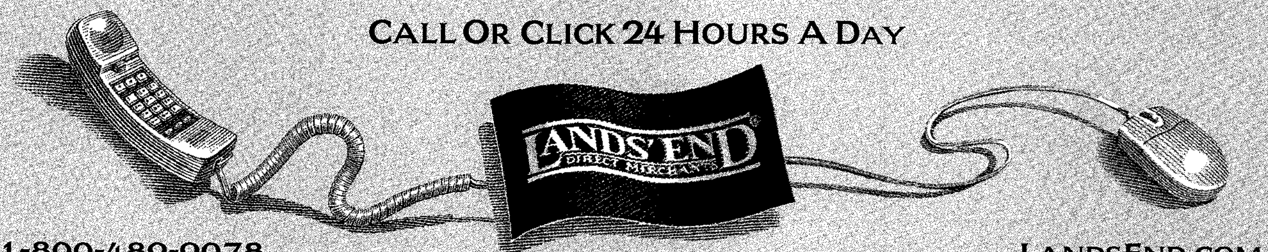

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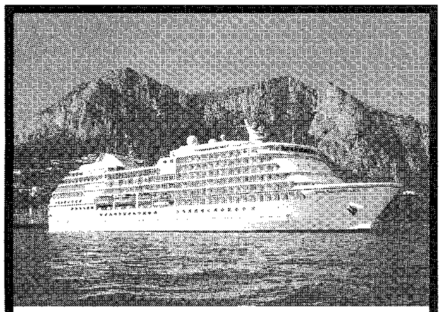

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CONTRIBUTORS

Elizabeth Kolbert ("The Prisoner," p. 44) has been a staff writer since 1999.

Peter Hessler ("The Nomad Vote," p. 58) lives in Beijing and writes frequently about China and other Asian countries.

Salman Rushdie (Fiction, p. 66) is the author of eight novels, including "Fury," which will come out in September.

Mark Singer ("The Radon Cure," p. 40) started writing the U.S. Journal column last fall.

Lawrence Weschler (Comment, p. 27) is the director of the New York Institute for the Humanities, at N.Y.U.

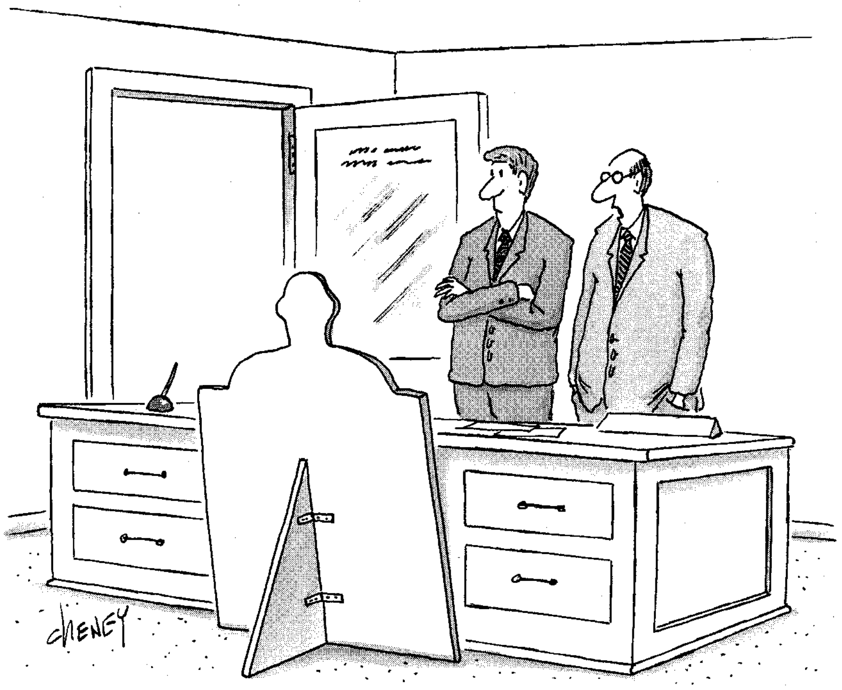
Nicholas Lemann ("Dreaming About War," p. 32) is the Washington correspondent for the magazine.

Malcolm Gladwell (Books, p. 76) was the recipient of a National Magazine Award this year for "The Pitchman," a Profile of Ron Popeil.

Julian Barnes (Books, p. 83) has been a contributor since 1989. His latest novel is "Love, etc."

Lucille Clifton (Poem, p. 63) won the 2000 National Book Award for Poetry.

Michael Roberts (Cover) has published two children's books, "The Jungle ABC" and "Mumbo Jumbo." ♦



"The weird thing is we can't find anyone qualified to replace him."

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THE MAIL

THE SCIENCE OF CANCER

Jerome Groopman correctly points out that the investment of thirty years and billions of dollars in cancer research has had disappointing results, in terms of lives saved and the quality of those lives ("The Thirty Years' War," June 4th). But this is due in large part to the neglect of cancer prevention. As many as half of all cancers could be prevented if we just implemented what we already know about cancer's causes. Tobacco use alone is responsible for a third of all cancer deaths, and thirty-five per cent of cancers may be attributable to diet, weight, and physical activity. It is time to put prevention to work, at both the individual and community levels. Groopman is right to challenge the misleading "war on cancer" metaphor. But even if no silver bullet exists, prevention's potential to save lives is well understood. If we want to reduce the burden of cancer now, prevention must be recognized as a critical part of the struggle.

Graham Colditz
Director of Education, Harvard Center for Cancer Prevention
Harvard School of Public Health
Boston, Mass.

Hope for improvement in the fight against cancer, Groopman argues, lies with independent, investigator-initiated research, without pressure for practical results. But freedom of research is an imperfect recipe. For example, cancer researchers tend to study not real tumors but cell cultures grown in dishes and then injected into specially bred mice—intellectually interesting, but distant from the course of the real disease. Investigators have their own self-serving interests, and even the greatest scientific minds may be no better at strategic research decisions than lay outsiders. Isaac Newton spent much of his creative energy and time on alchemy; Thomas Edison fought the idea of using alternating current; Linus Pauling was obsessed with vitamin C as a virtual panacea for many ailments, despite the lack of scientific evidence to support his idea. Groopman suggests that self-interest, in the form of the pharmaceuticals industry, may also help break the research impasse, quoting an expert who says that "initiative and creativity have moved to the private sector." This is true, but with the caveat that the need for profits can distort research priorities. The private sector by its nature is not interested in any scientific advance that cannot be protected as intellectual property. Prevention, environment, diet, and natural compounds remain outside their scope.

Alexander Kolchinsky, Ph.D.
Champaign, Ill.

Basic research, which Groopman feels has been neglected, is, in fact, where the majority of the federal funds spent on medical research now goes—for better or worse. Open-ended research may one day prove to be important for controlling cancer, but it has yet to do so. For now, it is only one (and not even the most important) approach. The reality is that fighting cancer means expending resources—even prevention, often mentioned as a simple way to save lives, is in practice difficult and expensive—and these resources have limits. When we decide how much to spend on research, we should keep our broader societal goals in mind. It is reasonable to ask which new types of knowledge are most likely to yield real benefits for humanity.

Michele S. Garfinkel and David H. Guston
Center for Science, Policy, & Outcomes
Washington, D.C.

EDITORS' NOTE:
An attribution indicating that Robin Robertson's poem "The Flamingos" was written after a poem of the same name by Rainer Maria Rilke was unintentionally omitted in the editing process (July 2nd).

•

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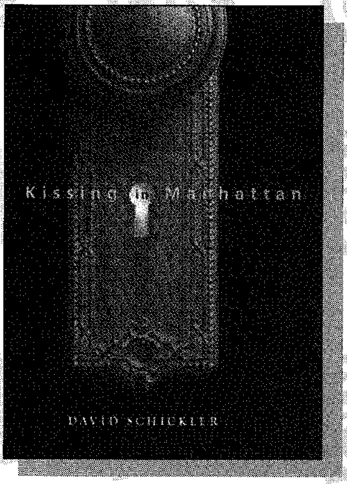

RICHARD HOWORTH,
SQUARE BOOKS, OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI

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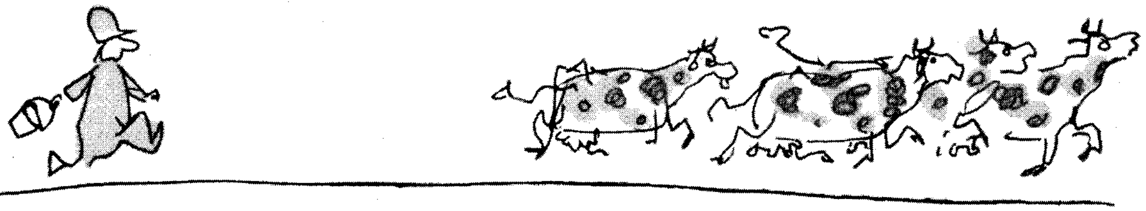

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THE THEATRE
OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

HAROLD PINTER FESTIVAL
Part of Lincoln Center's summer shindig. July 16 and 17 at 8: "A Kind of Alaska" and "One for the Road," staged by Dublin's Gate Theatre. Continues through July 22. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5928.)

MAJOR BARBARA
Cherry Jones has the title role in a Roundabout Theatre Company production of Shaw's play. Daniel Sullivan is the director. Two previews on July 11. Opens July 12 at 8. (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

MR. PRESIDENT
Gerard Allesandrini has updated Irving Berlin's 1962 musical to reflect the current political scene. The show will run in repertory with Allesandrini's "Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey." In previews. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
The Aquila Theatre Company's version of Shakespeare's comedy, set in London in the sixties. In previews. (45 Bleecker Street Theatre, at 45 Bleecker St. 529-4530.)

MUSIC FROM A SPARKLING PLANET
A new comedy by Douglas Carter Beane ("As Bees in Honey Drown"). Preview on July 11. Opens July 12 at 7. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 239-6200.)

SAINT LUCY'S EYES
Ruby Dee portrays a back-room abortionist in civil-rights-era Memphis, in an encore staging of Bridgette A. Wimberly's drama. Previews begin July 12. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

SLANGUAGE
Poetry, jazz, hip-hop, politics, the blues, and boleros are all a part of the latest work by the Bronx troupe known as Universes. Jo Bonney is the director. In previews. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200.)

SUMMER CAMP 7
SoHo Rep kicks off its annual festival of new works by emerging artists with the Ten Minute Play Series. July 11-14 at 7:30: "SoHo 3-Way," by David Wiener; "Writing in Code," by Anton Dudley; "Original Evil 1 and 2," by Jim Knable; "A Boy Who Is a Bird," by Heidi Schreck; "The King of Cimmaraon County," by Colleen Pickett; "The Reptile House," by Alexandra Tolk; and "The Ten Minute Play About Rosemary's Baby," by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa. The festival continues through Aug. 12. (46 Walker St. 479-7979.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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A THOUSAND CLOWNS
Tom Selleck is the eccentric Murray Burns, in a revival of Herb Gardner's 1962 comedy. John Rando is the director. Opens July 11 at 8. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG
Don Cheadle and Jeffrey Wright portray a pair of rivalrous brothers, Lincoln and Booth, in Suzan-Lori Parks's new comedy. In previews. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

OPENED RECENTLY

BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL
A kind of "My Fair Bat Boy," in which a half-bat, half-man—memorably played by Deven May—emerges from his childhood cave into adult bourgeois life. But the musical world he enters is one of darkness, not light, of ironies, not idealism, where plot is a history of abdications and song extolls the emptiness of all the standard credos—Christianity, family, community, love, redemption—and of the musical form itself. It's a jejune vision, but a smart, playful, and funny one nonetheless. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/9/01.) (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

BLAST!
A musical extravaganza, which evolved from the drum-and-bugle corps Star of Indiana. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

BLUE
In Charles Randolph-Wright's memory play, a trumpet player named Reuben Clark (Hill Harper) returns to his childhood in a small South Carolina town, where his family owns the only African-American funeral parlor. His beautiful, narcissistic, upwardly mobile mother, Peggy (Phylicia Rashad), rules the roost with a cunning withholding of affection and an ongoing fantasy of elegance and achievement, in which young Reuben (Chad Tucker) is idealized as "my own little Miles Davis" and Peggy is visited by the spectre of Blue Williams (the superb Michael McElroy), a jazz singer, who at first appears, and croons in a cool romantic vibrato, only to her. Unfortunately, Reuben's entire transition to manhood—his leaving home, his rejection of the trumpet, his therapy, and his final coming to terms with his mother—takes place offstage. What we are left with is a patina of literacy and boulevard lyricism but no internal life. It's basically a sitcom with song—as if Neil Simon and Lorraine Hansberry had married and produced "The Jeffersons" with a better vocabulary. (7/9/01) (Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. 307-4100.)

BLUE WINDOW
A revival of Craig Lucas's 1984 play, set at the Sunday-night dinner party of a group of friends living in New York. Marin Hinkle leads the cast. (28th Street Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 206-1515.)

CHAUCER IN ROME
The latest play by John Guare, set in Italy during the final year of the last millennium. Nicholas Martin is the director. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

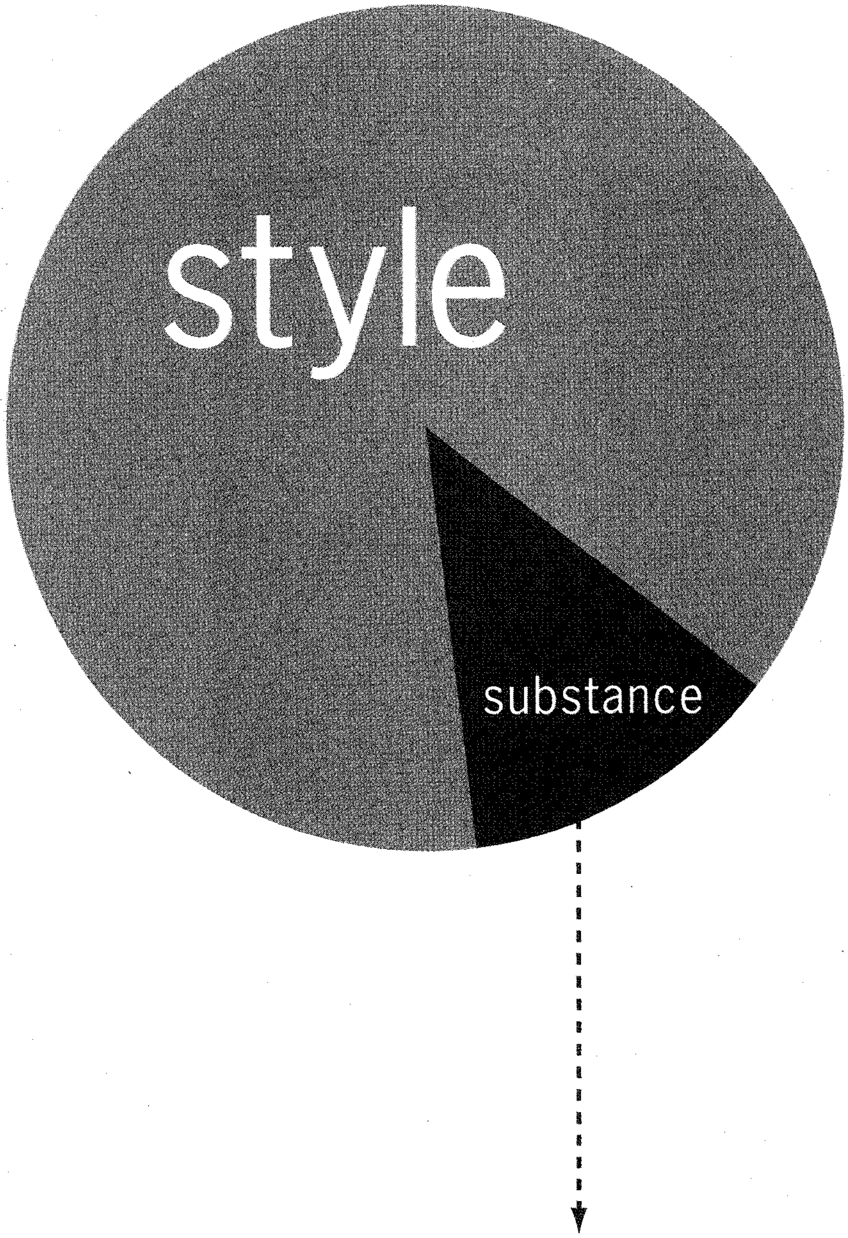
DOWN SOUTH
In a comedy by Doug Field, the Rattlestick Theatre takes aim at the Cuban-missile crisis. (224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 239-6200.)

ELI'S COMIN'
The late Laura Nyro's witty, passionate songs first came to public attention in 1968. This cycle of twenty of them manages, with music only, to tell the tale of a woman's life in the city—a tale of fun, temptation, loss, and redemption—without a false note (in any sense). The terrific Judy Kuhn leads the cast. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-0303. Closes July 14.)

FOLLIES
This revival of Stephen Sondheim and James Goldman's landmark 1971 musical, which takes place at a reunion of Ziegfeld-like performers, is less lavish than the original production, but no matter: in the hands of Matthew Warchus, who directed, the relentless, unblinking intelligence is intact. (4/23 & 30/01) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes July 14.)

42ND STREET
As a domineering diva who breaks her ankle before the big opening night, the wonderful Christine Ebersole steals the show in this revival of the 1980 tap musical based on the 1933 film. But it has to be said: it was probably easy to do. As the young chorine who steps in to save the day, Kate Levering doesn't have enough star power to shine above the legions of hoofers who crowd the stage, and Michael Cumpsty, as the gruff director, is sorely miscast. Still, if this sort of show is your cup of tea, the songs are wonderful and the dancing is fine—just know that the cup is not quite full. (Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

FOUR
A Worth Street Theatre staging of a drama by Christopher Shinn, which follows the relationships of a quartet of linked characters on a single day. Jeff Cohen is the director. (Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. 206-1515.)



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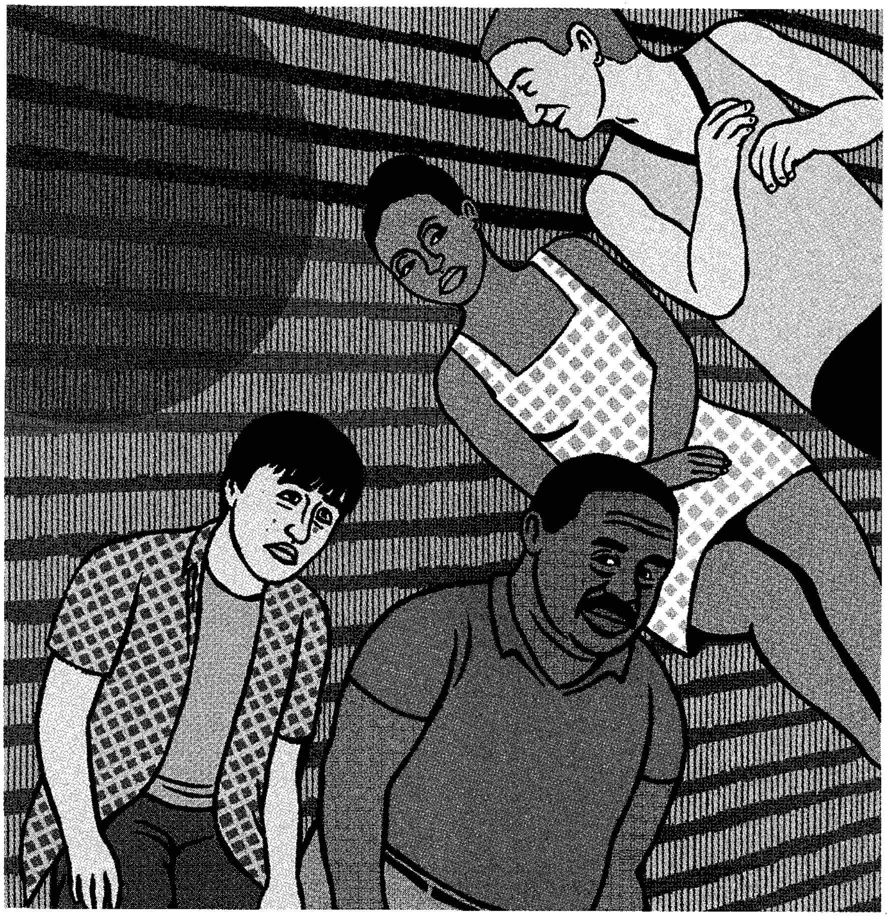
GEORGE GERSHWIN ALONE
A one-man portrait with music, written and performed by Hershey Felder and directed by Joel Zwick. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

IN THE PENAL COLONY
Philip Glass's new musical, based on the Kafka story. JoAnne Akalaitis is the director. (Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes July 14.)

I SING!
A musical comedy about postgraduate life in New York City, by Eli Bolin, Sam Forman, and Benjamin Salka. (Maverick, 307 W. 26th St. 239-6200.)



Keith Nobbs, Isiah Whitlock, Jr., Vinessa Antoine, and Armando Riesco, in "Four."

KIKI & HERB: STOP, DROP & ROLL
The drag duo otherwise known as Justin Bond and Kenny Mellman, in their latest show. (Fez, 380 Lafayette St. 533-2680.)

A LIFE
Fritz Weaver portrays an Irish civil servant nearing the end of his life, in Hugh Leonard's 1981 play. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

LOBBY HERO
In another era, the contrivances of Kenneth Lonergan's new play would have been called hokum. But because Lonergan is the writer and director of the moving and successful film "You Can Count on Me" and the author of the acclaimed plays "This Is Our Youth" and "The Waverly Gallery" the public is expecting him to aim high. He does, and misses. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

LOVE, JANIS
A musical play about Janis Joplin, built around her songs, writings, and interviews. Though it contains no new insight, it's a useful corrective to the drunken, drug-addicted legend, and the production is a fine one. Randal Myler directed with a sure eye for the telling detail, and the seven-member band really cooks. (Village Theatre, 158 Bleecker St. 307-4100.)

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
The first of two outdoor productions by the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, directed by Terence O'Brien. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 914-265-9575.)

ONCE AROUND THE CITY
Mark Linn-Baker is the director of a new musical comedy, about Manhattan life during the booming eighties. With music by Robert Reale and book and lyrics by Willie Reale. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST
Dale Wasserman's severely dated adaptation of Ken Kesey's 1962 novel—a broad allegory, set in a mental hospital, about the perils of nonconformity—is a quaint relic, but as staged by Chicago's excellent Steppenwolf Theatre it's a well-acted one. Gary Sinise leads the cast, as the incorrigible psychiatric patient Randle P. McMurphy. Terry Kinney is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE PLAY ABOUT THE BABY
In Edward Albee's new play, an older couple provide a harsh taste of what life has in store for a young couple with a new baby: the ravages of adulthood, the tidal wave of troubles and injuries that come with time. Brian Murray and Marian Seldes, two veterans who are rarely less than riveting, make the most of Albee's sharp, enigmatic writing; their highly stylized, virtuosic performances here are stunning. David Esbjornson directed. (2/19 & 26/01) (Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

THE PRODUCERS
High-camp heaven from Mel Brooks, who wrote the music and the lyrics for this monster-hit version of his 1968 movie—in which two scoundrels try to bilk their investors by staging a surefire failure, entitled "Springtime for Hitler." The performing centerpiece of the show is Nathan Lane, as the flamboyant huckster Max Bialystock; his kind of high-amperage panache is in limited supply these days, and both he and the excellent Matthew Broderick, as the hapless accountant Leo Bloom, deliver the mail. Expertly staged by Susan Stroman. (5/7/01) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

RANDOM HARVEST
In Richard Willett's new play, a writer on the verge of success is haunted by a tragedy—and by the ghost of Greer Garson. (HomeGrown Theatre, 2628 Broadway, at 100th St. 229-7500. Closes July 21.)

ROMEO AND JULIET
Theatreworks/USA's ninety-minute version of Shakespeare's play. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. For information about tickets, which are free, call 642-6754. Closes July 18.)

SIX GOUMBAS AND A WANNABE
A group of friends from the same Brooklyn neighborhood stage a reunion after fifteen years apart, in a comedy by Vincent Gogliormella. (Players, 115 MacDougal St. 239-6200.)

STONES IN HIS POCKETS
Marie Jones's play is set in an Irish village where a big-budget Hollywood movie is being made. Conleth Hill and Seán Campion play two extras in the movie and all thirteen other characters as well. Though the play has its clever ways when it comes to sending up both Hollywood and Irish mores, the stories told here aren't anything you haven't seen before. (4/16/01) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

TICK, TICK . . . BOOM!
The title represents the author Jonathan Larson's fear of time running out on his musical dreams, but it also plays as a spooky reminder that time did run out on him. (He died, at thirty-five, of an aortic aneurysm, just after the dress rehearsal of "Rent," his sprawling musical.) It's set on the eve of the composer's thirtieth birthday—his Walpurgisnacht—as he is caught between the pressures to succeed and to settle. Larson's ambition was to marry rock and roll to an up-to-the-minute Broadway-musical form, and this show, which has an orchestra of four and a slick, hardworking cast of three, shows him trying to adjust his goals to economic reality. Well directed by Scott Schwartz, and with Larson's plotline deftly reworked by David Auburn, it has a fetching modesty, and shows off Larson's idiosyncrasy, energy, and promise. What remains unresolved is whether he could have built on his lyric gifts to tell a proper story. Still, as a miniature testament to the ructions of his fervent heart, "Tick, Tick . . . Boom" has sinew and a winning sweetness. (7/9/01) (Jane Street Theatre, 113 Jane St. 239-6200.)

WHERE'S MY MONEY?
A new comedy by John Patrick Shanley, about two Brooklyn divorce lawyers. (Center Stage/NY, 48 W. 21st St. 905-0593. Closes July 14.)

WORLD OF MIRTH
A clown turns against his colleagues in a financially strapped carnival, in a drama by Murphy Guyer. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

DANCE

PILOBOLUS
The storied company, whose directorate (Robby Barnett, Alison Chase, Jonathan Wolken, and Michael Tracy) is nearly the same size as the troupe (which is always, in every incarnation, six), presents a month of performances, with three programs, each of which offers a new work. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 9-13 at 8 and July 14 at 2 and 8.)

NEW YORK CITY TAP FESTIVAL
Tony Waag, the festival's producer, knows what to do when the talent is late. At the legendary midtown rehearsal hall Fazil's, he broke into a fey and endearing soft-shoe number as he waited for a group called O'D n' Tap to arrive from Hartford. The four teen-agers in the group are part of a phalanx of tappers, both obscure and illustrious, who are converging on the city for workshops, jams, and performances. When O'D n' Tap finally showed, they started right in on Waag's smart, entertaining patterns without even stopping to spit out their gum. Loud and slouchy (and chomping away), they held the rhythms tight between them as only a teen-ager or a pro hoofer could. No one else would care so much, and conceal it so well. At a gala tribute to Gregory Hines, the troupe will perform with Brenda Bufalino, Jimmy Slyde, Sarah Petronio, and, very likely, Savion Glover. (The Duke, 229 W. 42nd

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

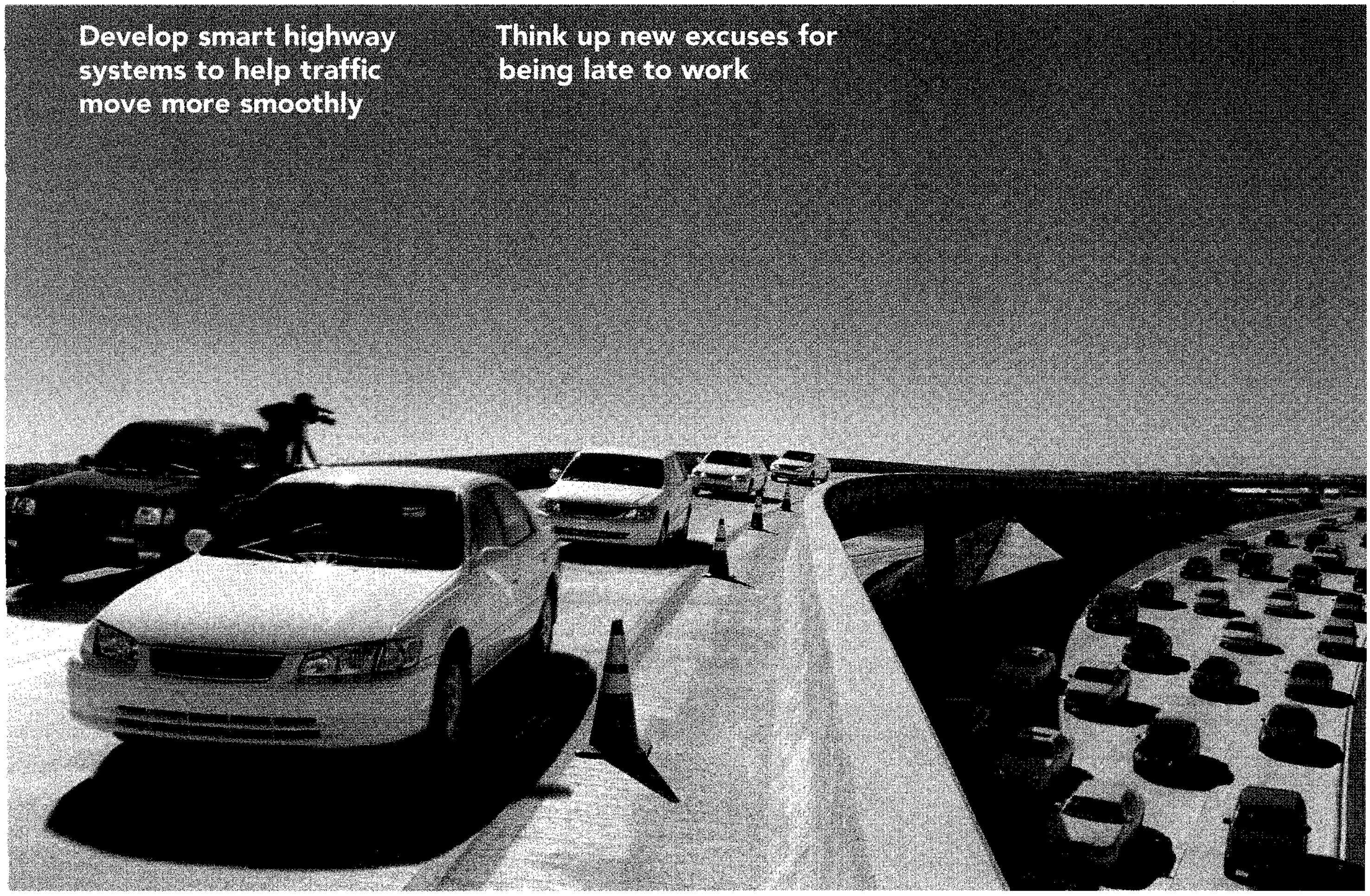
TODAY

Develop smart highway systems to help traffic move more smoothly

TOMORROW

Think up new excuses for being late to work

TOYOTA



"The dog ate my alarm clock."

"My long-lost uncle dropped in for tea."

"A squirrel short-circuited the garage door."

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St. 239-6200. July 9 at 6 and 8, July 10-11 and July 13-15 at 7 and 9, and the gala, July 12 at 6:30.)

"A CURIOUS INVASION"
Wave Hill's alfresco dance series opens with a site-specific work, choreographed by Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig, which leads the audience through the twenty-eight-acre garden, where it encounters, at least during the performances, a smattering of haystacks, a gantlet of electric fans, a trio of hoses, and two thousand ice cubes. (Wave Hill, 675 W. 252nd St., the Bronx. 718-549-3200. July 11 at 6:30 and July 15 at 5.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
The Canadian Margie Gillis performs solos, and Mark Haim presents "The Goldberg Variations." (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. July 13 at 8:30.)

"TX: DANCE STORIES"
The former Mark Morris dancer Holly Williams brings her troupe of dancers and actors from Austin, Texas, for an evening of works that combine choreography and storytelling. The four pieces on the program include "The End of Firpo in the World," based on a George Saunders short story, and "Most Sincerely Dead." (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 924-0077. July 13 at 9 and July 14 at 8.)

URBAN TAP
The collective of dancers and musicians organized and inspired by the exceptionally quick-footed Herbin (Tamango) Van Cayseele offers diverse entertainment by tappers, a capoeira specialist, a stilt stomper, and others, accompanied by music from African drummers, an Italian trumpeter, a rapper, and a d.j. (Battery Park City. No tickets necessary. July 17 at 7.)

"RIVERDANCE—ON BROADWAY"
Not the Lord of the Dance with his shirt off and the leather truss. The other one. (Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. 307-4100. July 11 and July 14 at 2 and 8, July 12-13 and July 17 at 8, and July 15 at 3. Through Aug. 26.)

OUT OF TOWN

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL
July 10-13 at 8, July 14 at 2 and 8, and July 15 at 2: The choreographers Robert LaFosse and Chet Walker present "The Seven Deadly Sins." ♦ July 12-13 at 8:15, July 14 at 2:15 and 8:15, and July 15 at 5: "From the Horse's Mouth," choreographed by Tina Croll and James Cunningham. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

FREEDY JOHNSTON / JILL SOBULE
The long-suffering post-folk songwriter Johnston has a knack for churning out exacting folk rock with careful detail and piercing language. Sobule is a feisty post-punk feminist whose work brings to mind a cross between Liz Phair and Gertrude Stein. (World Trade Center Plaza. July 11 at 6.)

THE CULT
The veteran British band—notorious for morphing from psychedelic goths into hirsute leather-clad rock pigs and back again—returns with "Beyond Good and Evil," a new album of bombast and pageantry. Gratuitous posing and mike-swinging shall be the order of the evening as this gloriously unsubtle band capitalizes on last year's successful reunion tour. With Monster Magnet and Stabbing Westward. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. July 11 at 6:45.)

MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
Dancing under the stars at Lincoln Center. July 11: Before the Austin, Texas, native **Rick Treviño** joined the pan-Latin mega group Los Super Seven he carved out a nice career mixing country with more southern forms of music. ♦ July 12: The Sun Records veteran **Billy Lee Riley,** known for such rockabilly classics as "Flying Saucer Rock 'n' Roll" and "Red Hot," leads the rockabilly portion of this evening. The saxophonist and vocalist **Sam Butera,** who earned his credentials with Louis Prima and Keely Smith back in the fifties and sixties, heats things up for the swing dancers in the crowd. ♦ July 13: The flamboyant Dominican vocalist **Milly Quezada** joins **Cuco Valoy** for a double bill of merengue and salsa. ♦ July 14: Two retro bands from the West Coast. San Francisco's **Swing Session** has a taste for rhythm and blues. **Mora's Modern Rhythmists,** hailing from Los Angeles, limit their repertoire to the early days of swing, from 1929 to 1937. ♦ July 17: **Grupo Caribe,** an eight-piece salsa outfit, shares the stage with the curious **Salsa Celtica,** a band that mixes Afro-Cuban and Scottish music. (Fountain Plaza. 875-5766. Dancing starts at 7:30; lessons are offered at 6:30.)

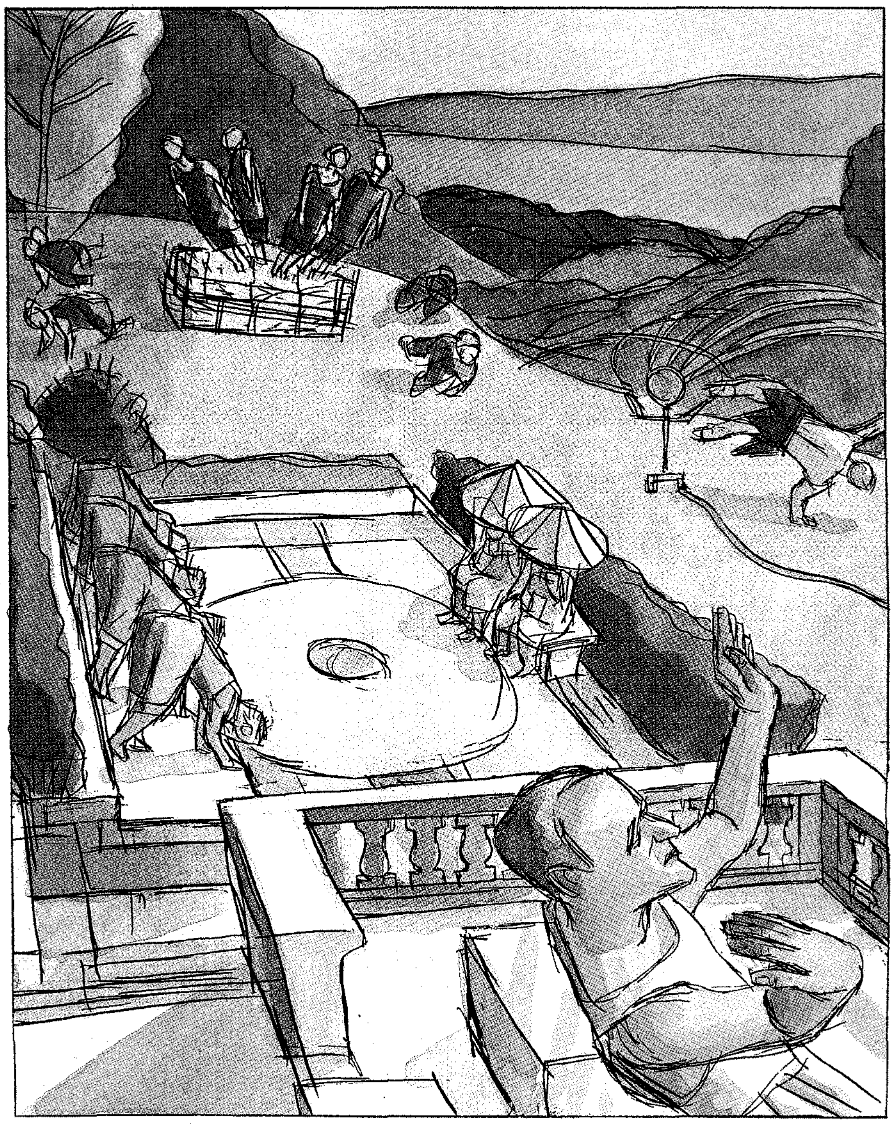
LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL
"Africa Out Loud" is the theme for the musical portion of this year's festival. July 11 at 8:30: The seminal West African ensemble the **Super Rail Band** makes its New York City début. This resilient band, formed in Mali in 1971 in response to the dictatorship of Moussa Traore, has seen such superstar singers as Salif Keita and Mory Kante pass through its ranks. Today it remains a premier ambassador of Manding swing, a body-shaking genre that combines local melodies and rhythms with those of Latin music. ♦ July 13 at 8:30: **Amampondo,** a percussion-heavy outfit from South Africa, joins **Cheikh Lô,** an up-and-coming Senegalese singer. ♦ July 16 at 8:30: **Koffi Olomide** hails from the Congo, and his deep baritone, his penchant for Afro-Cuban rhythms, and the intricate dancing of his backing chorus, the Koffiettes, have earned him a wide following at home and in Europe. (La Guardia Concert Hall, Amsterdam Ave. at 65th St. 721-6500. Through July 19.)

DAVID JOHANSEN AND THE HARRY SMITHS
Beautiful American music. Johansen's accomplished acoustic band supplies an evening of folk, country, and blues tunes that are heartfelt, funny, and often very odd indeed. (Castle Clinton, Battery Park. July 12 at 7. Free tickets, which are required, will be distributed at 5.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
July 12 at 7: The jamming quintet **moe.** has performed literally hundreds of times each year since its inception, nine years ago in Buffalo, New York. A benefit concert. ♦ July 14 at 3: The British d.j. duo known as **Basement Jaxx.** With South Africa's **Bongo Maffin.** ♦ July 15 at 3: The Vive la World! tour brings to town a collection of multicultural contemporary French acts. The Tunisian singer **Amina** incorporates the *saz* (a long-necked lute) and the *nay* (an oblique, rim-blown flute) into her Parisian pop. **Ekova** is a trio comprised of an American cellist, an Iranian percussionist, and an Algerian guitarist, and its dance music is as international as might be expected. **Lo'Jo** is a collective that mixes *chansons,* Algerian *rai,* and other influences into a tasty sonic bouillabaisse. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 360-2777.)

CHICAGO
Despite not having had a hit in some twenty years, the seventies-era radio veterans have never called it a day. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. July 12 at 8.)

"AREA: ONE"
The massive electronica/sell-whatever-we-can-to-the-future-consumers-of-America/hip-hop tour, featuring the unavoidable face of computerized



"A Curious Invasion," choreographed by Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig, at Wave Hill.

beats and samples, **Moby**; the rollicking Atlanta rap duo **OutKast**; the outstanding Philadelphia hip-hop collective the **Roots**; the Canadian songstress **Nelly Furtado**; superstar d.j. **Paul Oakenfold**; the Detroit techno-innovator **Carl Cox**; and others. (Jones Beach. July 15-16 at 4:30.)

REEL BIG FISH / GOLDFINGER
Joining forces on the cheekily titled "Crouching Fish, Hidden Finger" tour, the nineties-neo-ska-boom survivors Reel Big Fish and Goldfinger carry on their punky, California-tinged take on all things checkered and two-toned. (Roseland. July 17 at 6.)

"JAZZ IN JULY"
The annual uptown improvisational get-together starts on July 17 at 8 with a concert titled "Americans in Paris," featuring Bucky Pizzarelli, Terry Burrell, Dan Levinson, Howard Alden, Derek Smith, Dick Hyman, Ken Peplowski, Randy Sandke, Byron Stripling, Andy Stein, Loren Schoenberg, Rufus Reid, Eddie Locke, and Wycliffe Gordon. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

BLARNEY STAR
43 Murray St. (732-2873)—July 13: The extremely accomplished tin-whistle player **Mary Bergin** joins her sister **Antoinette McKenna,** who happens to be a rather fine harp player herself, and Antoinette's husband, the uilleann-pipe virtuoso **Joe.**

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—July 17: The British garage sensation **Craig David.** ♦ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 11: The exceptional Cuban guitarist **Juan-Carlos Formell** holds court. July 16: A night of avant-garde female Japanese rock and roll with **Seagulls Screaming Kiss Her Kiss Her.**

MARION'S CONTINENTAL RESTAURANT & LOUNGE
354 Bowery, between 3rd and 4th Sts. (475-7621)—From July 11 to Labor Day this East Village nightspot dispenses with its usual décor and becomes the Kahiki Lounge. Inspired by a now defunct sixties-era Columbus, Ohio, Polynesian restaurant, the lounge is outfitted with straw huts, bamboo stalks, and colorful paper lanterns. On opening night, drinks will be served by the bathing-suit-clad Cabana Boys, named for a new brand of flavored rum that, thanks to its slick packaging, has appealed to consumer groups of various sexual orientations (much to the surprise of its producer, the old-line Maine distillery White Rock). Order a mai tai and and a pupu platter and take a cheap trip to the South Seas.

MAXWELL'S
1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—July 16: Pushing harmony-laden power pop while the rest of their city was going grunge, Seattle's sorely undersung **Posies** nonetheless earned a loyal cult following.

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—July 13-14: **Foetus.** Gradually approaching living-legend status, the Australian expatriate J. G. (Foetus) Thirlwell has for the past twenty years played a leading role in industrial rock, a genre of unrelenting ferocity. Though some may write Thirlwell off as a stylized noisenik, his vast body of work actually displays a masterful command of the medium of sound.

VILLAGE UNDERGROUND
130 W. 3rd St. (777-7745)—July 13: **Mark Eitzel,** the erstwhile leader of San Francisco's late and lamented American Music Club, brings his bittersweet, tenderloin songbook to town. With **David Garza,** an Irving, Texas, native and a mind-blowingly inventive singer-songwriter. He sings torch songs, confessionals, and straight-ahead pop quite unlike anything else out there.

BEN KATCHOR

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—July 12-14: The **Jimmy Heath** quartet. The saxophonist and composer Heath is also one of the great unsung bandleaders: his ensembles showcase his melodic writing, his ear for tonal color, and his innate understanding of the way horns, brass, and rhythm can sing together. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through July 15: The alto saxophonist **David Sanborn** possesses one of the most passionate and distinctive sounds in jazz. Why he uses it to make flaccid, borderline-jazz recordings is between him and his accountant.

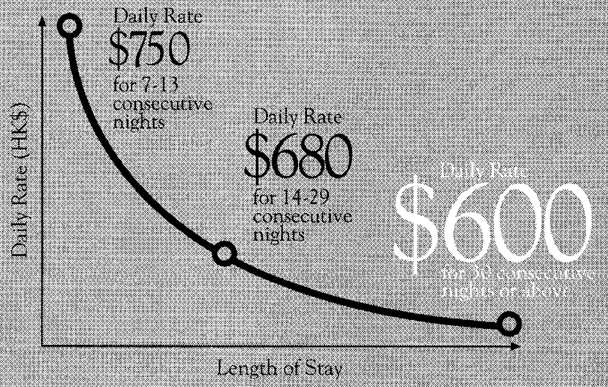
CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pianist **Peter Mintun** is in charge at the Bemelmans Bar. A genuine throwback to a gentler time, this elegant performer specializes in curios from the twenties and thirties like "Kitten on the Keys," but he has also been known to play cartoon theme songs if the mood (or the crowd) warrants it.

CARNEGIE CLUB
156 W. 56th St. (957-9676)—Friday and Saturday nights belong to **Carey Hoffman,** a tireless interpreter of the songs favored by Frank Sinatra.

IRIDIUM
48 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through July 15: Where **Jon Hendricks,** the grand old man of vocalese (that nearly lost art of writing and singing lyrics to previously existing jazz solos) gets his vigor and enthusiasm from is anybody's guess, but this generous performer is always willing to spread the mirth around. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 15: The drummer and bandleader **Chico Hamilton** obviously has an ear for

THE LONGER
YOU STAY
THE MORE YOU
SAVE



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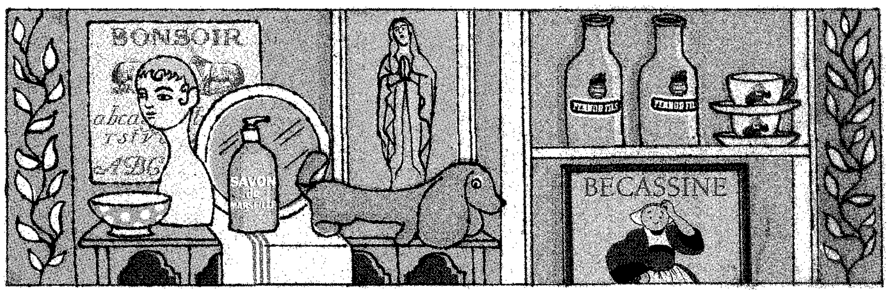
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

La Vie en Rose

"We see armoires, yes, but this we don't see!" beams Bruno Hamon, showing off the nineteen-forties wooden phone booth that he carted back from a bistro in Normandy. Hamon, who owns **AR BREIZH ANTIQUES** (37A Bedford St.; 243-8683), makes the rounds in Brittany and Normandy five times a year, filling his plank-floored shop both with his sure sellers (those armoires) and with less predictable flights of fancy. "This guy had an obsession with apples," he says of the early-twentieth-century farmer and carpenter who built a vast four-door apple coop that has a chicken-wire front and the original, if rusted, key still in the lock ($4,800). One small area in the cabinet has been set aside for a circa-1915 Quimper faience tea set ($850). But not everything in the shop has an agrarian provenance. "I never know what I'm going to bring back," Hamon says with a shrug, pointing to a nineteen-sixties metal chair whose back narrows and devolves suddenly into the spotted neck and head of a giraffe ($1,400). "Talk about the unsellable! Ah, but I fell in love with it."

A love of the Gallic trifle is likewise evident at **FRENCH GENERAL** (35 Crosby St.; 343-7474), a shop on one of the last cobblestoned streets in Manhattan. "We travel to the markets in Saint-Rémy and Aix, and then we shoot up to Paris," says Kaari Meng, who, along with her sister Molly, favors items sprung from *marchés aux puces*: cards of glass buttons the color of old Perrier bottles, wide-mouthed marmalade jars, enamel basins from old fountains, Pernod Fils carafes, and the kind of homespun shifts the girls sported in "Mädchen in Uniform" (around $100). Embroidered red-and-white linens and tea towels are crisp despite a hundred years of laundering, though hosts who prefer their serviettes disposable may opt for brand-new paper napkins decorated with rural scenes and the alternating legends "jardin à la française" and "bonsoir" ($6 for 20).



Over at **FRENCHWARE** (98 Thompson St.; 625-3131) there's a deep affection for early-twentieth-century French funnies, and not just familiar faces like Babar and Tintin. Bécassine, a bumbling Breton serving girl who wears a traditional white cap and long apron, shows up on everything from key rings to chocolate bowls. "We get more elderly French ladies in here who just start trilling when they see her," says Christopher Sands, a co-owner, who even has Bécassine-bedecked egg cups ($11) and egg spoons ($28 for two). Gaston Lagaffe, a loose-jointed fellow who looks to be a sort of Frenchified Maynard G. Krebs, is in the house as well, his slacker countenance showing up on an old-fashioned alarm clock ($49) that depicts him barefoot in a turquoise nightshirt, clutching a coffee cup, next to the slogan, "La première gaffe c'est de se lever!!" Not all the merchandise is cartoon-related: along with blue-and-white-striped sailor shirts and shoulder-buttoned sweaters there are the French versions of cowboy shirts, made of Provençal printed cotton in a style copied from the *chemises* favored by horse herders on the Camargue ($139 to $199). And there's even a rack of those virtually indestructible hip-length woollen cardigans that every *maman* dons, along with pleated skirt, sensible brogues, and string shopping bag, to conduct her daily rounds. "Grandmothers traditionally give these sweaters to girls when they graduate from lycée," says Sands. "They last a lifetime."

—*Lynn Yaeger*

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

talent—his alumni include Charles Lloyd, Eric Dolphy, Jim Hall, and Arthur Blythe—so whoever he brings to the stage should be worth listening to. If not, just concentrate on the ageless swing of this eighty-year-old veteran.

MAKOR
35 W. 67th St. (601-1000)—July 17: The singer **Nora York's** clever conflations of iconic pop, jazz, gospel, and what-have-you are ingenious, but her affecting originals are what truly expose the quirky strength of this extravagant talent.

TONIC
107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—July 16: Time hasn't dulled **James (Blood) Ulmer's** edge—pulling twisted chords and shards of melody from his guitar while half-barking, half-drawling spacey blues, he sounds as nasty as ever.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through July 15: The **David (Fathead) Newman** quartet. The tenor saxophonist has been carrying the banner of gritty soul-jazz since he was the pride of Ray Charles's classic band of the fifties. Newman came up the hard way, and you can hear every second of dues-paying in the way he roughhouses with his instrument. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—**"Summer Selections: American Landscape Drawings and Watercolors."** Nearly fifty summer landscapes and seascapes—all works on paper by American artists—are tucked away in the cozy mezzanine galleries of the American Wing. Maurice Prendergast conveys the simple pleasures of a seaside stroll in a jaunty watercolor of nineteenth-century daytrippers. On a darker note, Thomas Cole's fastidious drawing "The Wounded Indian Slaking His Death-Thirst" pits the eternity of nature against the fragility of life, as massive boulders and contorted trees dwarf the tiny stooping figure. Frequent visitors to the museum will get a kick out of Frederick Arthur Bridgman's studies of the Temple of Dendur, portrayed against a view of Egypt as opposed to the familiar one of Central Park. Through Sept. 2. ♦ **"Dancing on the Roof: Photography and the Bauhaus (1923-29)"** focusses on the work of László Moholy-Nagy and his students at the Weimar haven for artistic experiment. Through Aug. 26. ♦ In summertime, the museum's roof is transformed into Met Hampton (a bikini-free zone). This year, the sun worshippers and singles who mob the roof on weekend evenings share their turf with five large sculptures by Joel Shapiro. Three are cast in bronze, two in aluminum (one painted fire-engine red and the other cobalt blue). All five employ a similar formal strategy: square and rectangular bars are joined together at apparently haphazard angles. The arrangements have a Constructivist flavor and, in the case of the colored sculptures, invite an anthropomorphic reading, with the bars legible as arms, trunks, and legs. But the most ambitious piece, which is twenty-four feet high and looks gravitationally impossible, resembles a tumbling game of pickup sticks. Through late fall. ♦ With a consort of starstruck press and film clips and more than eighty original outfits, **"Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years"** reminds viewers of the almost brash propriety of the "Jackie look." Through July 29. ♦ **"Beyond the Easel: Decorative Painting by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis, and Roussel, 1890-1930."** Through Sept. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—An antidote to Gehry fever, the first half of the Mies van der Rohe extravaganza has opened with "Mies in Berlin." Matching its subject's famous simplicity, the show is a calmly paced bildungsroman, tracing a thirty-year progression from Schinkelesque prodigy to modernist master. Understandably, the show's cu-

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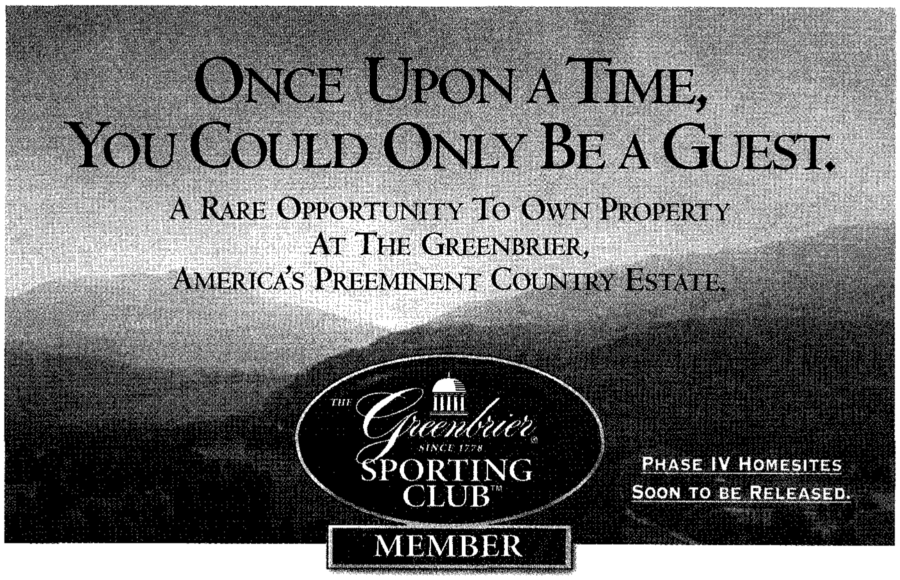
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The East Village restaurant Marion's becomes the Polynesian-themed Kahiki Lounge from now until Labor Day (see Night Life).

rators, Terence Riley and Barry Bergdoll, worried that canonical projects like the Tughendot House and the Barcelona Pavilion might seem too familiar. Their decision to freshen things up with Thomas Ruff's cloying colorized photographs is the show's only lapse. Otherwise, it's easy to fall under the spell of Mies's planar vision, his integration of landscape and garden design (more suited to a Californian than a Germanic climate), and his infectious love of *betonte Leere,* or heightened emptiness. A complementary show (at the Whitney) picks up where this one leaves off, with Mies's arrival in the United States in 1938. Through Sept. 11. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—At Frank Gehry's first retrospective, at the Whitney, in 1986, undulant titanium roofs and wriggling walls were nowhere in sight. The Los Angeles-based architect seemed a quirky regional figure, fond of unorthodox materials (cardboard, chain-link fencing) and given to chopping projects into multiple room-sized buildings. Nobody could have predicted that he would soon be the world's most sought-after and publicized architect. This new, profoundly exhilarating show tracks Gehry's path to Bilbao, and offers working models of current projects in Scotland, Germany, Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. It's too much to absorb in a single visit, but even a quick walk-through will leave visitors delighted, buoyed, amazed—and a little nostalgic for the plumb-line architecture that Gehry's fluid, crumpling planes seem poised to supplant. Through Aug. 26. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—For his first New York retrospective, Wayne Thiebaud's career has been served up in four courses, beginning with dessert. During his pastry period, Thiebaud turned cafeteria fare—not just wedges of cake and pie but a whole alphabet of prepared foods—into something enduringly wry and lovely, a celebration of everyday artifice. The stiff and studied portraits that follow are the show's weakest moment, but Thiebaud returns to form in the subsequent cityscapes and farmland scenes, creating steep, unapologetic Arcadias. There are echoes of Hopper, Diebenkorn, and Johns throughout, but none of Thiebaud's predecessors have his cool, confectionary jauntiness. Through Sept. 23. ♦ **"Mies in America,"** the larger of the companion exhibitions on the onetime Bauhaus director, shows how the architect's work evolved after his arrival here in 1938, from European avant-gardism to an increasingly space-age take on American practicality. Through Sept. 23. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, Fridays, 1 to 9.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—The Discovery Room, a hands-on educational program conceived in the museum's dark belly, has just moved into its new and permanent headquarters, a sunny, two-thousand-square-foot play space next door to the familiar big ceremonial canoe at the Seventy-seventh Street entrance. Inside the room, a replica of an African baobab tree spreads its branches over displays about the scientists and artists who studied and re-created it, and a working dinosaur dig busies young paleontologists. There's a surprisingly wide variety of specimens for little paws to hold and shake and investigate, including an outsized dinosaur-toe bone, a mastodon tusk, and, resting in a shredded paper nest, in drawer 52 of a brand-new child-sized specimen cabinet, one emu egg, now broken. The management describes the accident as a learning experience. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART

Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—Leon Golub, the dour dean of political painters, is the subject of a new retrospective, covering almost fifty years of art work. Through Aug. 19. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

NEW MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

583 Broadway (219-1222)—The first American retrospective for William Kentridge, a South African artist best known for poetic animated films based on his own charcoal drawings. While these oblique chronicles, which include the occasional angry mob and tortured prisoner, do depict the strife of apartheid, Kentridge is a humanist, not an activist. The imagery in his films unfurls with the illogical clarity of a dream: faucets become birds, heads become bowls, and handkerchiefs weep, flooding the floor. Even the most politically explicit film, "Ubu and the Truth Commission," stars a nineteenth-century cartoon character (the eponymous Ubu, conceived by Alfred Jarry). The show includes eleven films, more than sixty drawings, videotapes of the artist's theatrical projects, and two recent installations that combine film projections with mirrored objects. Through Sept. 16. (Open Wednesdays and Sundays, noon to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, noon to 8.)

GALLERIES–UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

TIMOTHY HAWKESWORTH

The pale sneaker prints at the top of this show's first frantically drawn and redrawn image, "Crossing the Divide," conjure a brief vision of the artist at work, pacing and crouching over his paper. His figures—horses pawing the ground or raising a head as far as the neck will reach—are similarly active. Hawkesworth's rough-looking equine compositions turn out to be as precisely centered as Leonardo's iconic man in a circle, and almost too pleasingly balanced, like a power-pop song hidden under a layer of feedback. Through July 20. (Littlejohn Contemporary, 41 E. 57th St. 980-2323.)

MARCELLUS HALL

ALEX KATZ
Katz now occupies an almost Bogart-like position in the art world: his unflappable decisiveness seems so natural that it's easy to forget that it is a matter of skill and will. Which is why this small exhibition is such a pleasure. A collection of rarely seen preliminary sketches, drawings, and early collages, the show suggests the behind-the-scenes effort that goes into Katz's taciturn surfaces. "Ada in Aqua," for example, appears in three versions, on board, paper, and canvas; Katz is first casual, then careful, and finally brash. Through July 13. (Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. 861-7338.)

"PLATYPUS"
Just as reptile meets mammal and bird in the duck-billed platypus, art mingles with everything from fashion to film in this blithe group show curated by Augusto Arbizo. L.A. painter Kim Fischer puts a fresh spin on logo mania in a pair of tomato-red paintings that hybridize Ad Reinhardt and Andre Courèges (close inspection of the apparently monochrome canvases reveals the initials "AC"). Michael Minelli's text-and-photo collages play a winning game of six degrees of separation, linking such total strangers as Jerry Garcia, JonBenét Ramsey, and the artist's mother. But best of show goes to the London-based Italian artist Enrico David, whose needlework canvas conflates De Chirico and Carnaby Street. Through July 20. (Lawrence Rubin Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 445-0444.)

Short List

TRENTON DOYLE HANCOCK
James Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. 755-7171.
Through July 28.

ALEXANDER LIBERMAN
Ameringer Howard, 41 E. 57th St. 935-1110.
Through Aug. 10.

WAYNE THIEBAUD
Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 987-4997.
Through July 12.

"Jump Over the Bauhaus," by Lux Feininger, at the Met.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

C
This briefly named collective of three artists, Matthew Bakkom, Lilah Freedland, and Craig Smith, professes interest in the "recombinant nature" of their work. So they study themselves closely: a photograph of a recent project shows Lilah reading Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" in a Times Square shop window while Matthew and Craig stand by, looking suspiciously like mannequins. Several sets of contact sheets chronicle the process of molding, while nearly naked, a Frankenstein-like arm and leg, which rest on a pedestal nearby, intimately entwined. While some of the work, like last fall's apple-pie-making production, "Picking, Baking, Sharing," is charming, much of it, like the dunk tank at the show's opening, leaves the viewer with too much information. Through July 21. (Rare, 435 W. 14th St. 645-5591.)

"SIX FEET UNDER: SUMMER NOIR"
The curators at White Box have done what every gallery's staff dreams of—locked the clients out. They asked the six artists whose work is appearing over the course of this six-week series to assemble self-enclosed window displays, meant to be viewed from the street—their theme is crime, and the scenes are sealed. Brigitte Waldach, opening with "Swimming Pool," decorated the front room with depth markers and distorted bodies, and tinted the window glass a disorienting blue. Pablo Helguera's closing "Sublimations" will project portions of a lineup of criminals. In between, "Rear Window" references, a broken pearl necklace, and books from Loompanics, the publisher from which Timothy McVeigh ordered his bomb-making manual, all get a moment in the window. Through July 24. (White Box, 525 W. 26th St. 714-2347.)

Short List

JACQUELINE BOOTIER
Lombard Fried, 531 W. 26th St. 967-8040.
Through July 27.

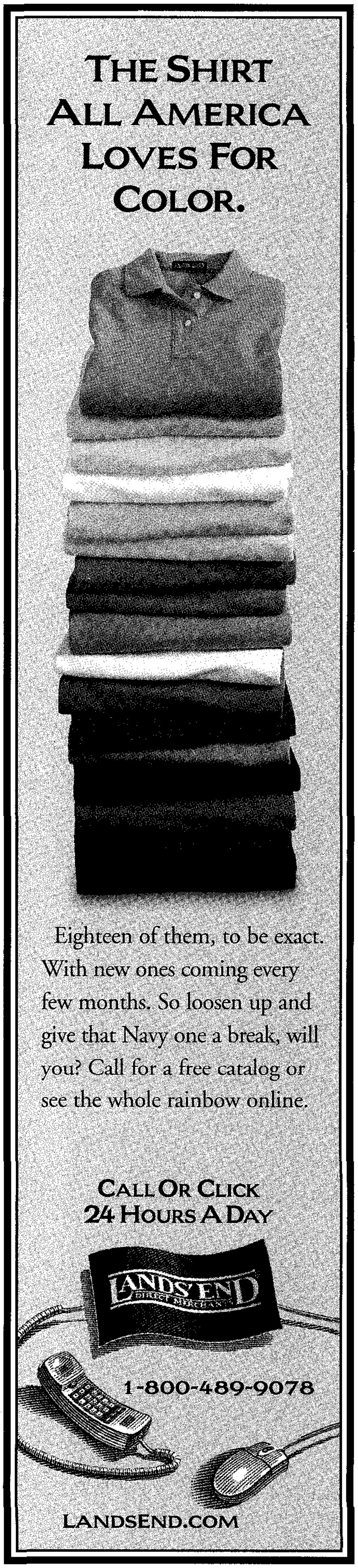
KAREN F. GIUSTI
Nikolai, 505 W. 22nd St. 414-8511.
Through July 14.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

TEUN HOCKS
Painted photography is a notoriously drecky genre, but this Dutch artist handles it with a rare, sweet-tempered aplomb. All of his pictures feature a neatly dressed figure—Hocks himself—in a mildly surreal predicament. He's a logger, cutting down a forest with an oar; a birder, leaning forlornly against a tree; a sleeper whose bed straddles a path that winds through fairy-tale hills. It's easy to see echoes of Magritte and Rockwell here, but the connection isn't dishonorable: Hocks shares their weird knack for tweaking banality till it glimmers. Through Aug. 10. (P.P.O.W, 476 Broome St. 941-8642.)

"NEW YORK CA. 1975"
Not that we don't miss Jeff Koons's flowering puppy, but at a time when art relies increasingly on spectacle this show of conceptual works from the mid-seventies is refreshing. In the front gallery, Martha Rosler's "Bringing the War Home" series, in which she slyly collaged war imagery into layouts from home-decorating magazines, wears its political heart on its sleeve. The second gallery is devoted to pleasantly low-tech documentation—mostly of the choreography of Yvonne Rainer and Trisha Brown, though a photograph of an early Richard Serra sculpture by Peter Moore is also included. Through Aug. 3. (Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074.)

"PAINTINGS (BETWEEN TEXTS AND TEXTILES)"
The five painters in this sure-handed group show are under the sway of minimalism's most serviceable muse—the grid. Martha Stewart meets Bridget Riley in Betsy Kaufman's "Waver a Moment," a dizzying array of mattress-ticking stripes in white, brown, and blue. Elena de Rivera's rose-colored canvas (think pink graph paper) pairs the haptic rigor of Agnes Martin with the embroidery function on a sewing machine (the initials "ER" in a cursive font are repeated around the border). Mark Ferguson escapes the grid in a mostly monochrome canvas, an atmospheric field of storm-cloud gray that breaks out along the bottom edge in a colorful, confettilike squall of dots. Through July 21. (Gallery 123, at 123 Watts St. 219-1482.)



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"WET"
This exhibition of works by more than thirty artists is as crowded and lively as a public pool in July, and it overflows the small gallery, offering almost every possible take on the title. Puddles, tears, and toilets; drinking, drowning, and snorkeling; it's all here, in every imaginable contemporary idiom. Naturally, some lewdness is de rigueur: the show's high point is an ejaculatory sculpture by Peter Boynton, a sort of abstract equivalent to Takashi Murakami's "Lonesome Cowboy." The finest piece, however, is its anticlimax, Katherine Bradford's painting of a naked middle-aged man—his doormat of chest hair is comic perfection—floating in the cerulean shallows of a swimming pool, looking spent. Through July 27. (Ross, 569 Broadway. 343-2161.)

Short List

AIDAS BAREIKIS
Koenig, 359 Broadway. 334-9255.
Through July 28.
LINDA STOJAK
Haller, 560 Broadway. 219-2500.
Through July 17.

PHOTOGRAPHY

MARIANA COOK
Cook, who has published several books of family portraits ("Mothers and Sons," "Fathers and Daughters," "Couples") which interleaf the famous with the obscure, here looks for intimacy in the still-life. But, as titles like "Barbara's Pears, West Tisbury, Massachusetts, October 10, 1999, 10:30 A.M." signal, these images seek their own sort of name recognition, suggesting the cozy lives of the artist's friends in old East Coast towns. The skeptical eyes of the title bird in "Blind Chicken, Kent, Connecticut, February 19, 1999, 11:00 A.M." seem to see right through it all. Through Aug. 10. (Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 1018 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 744-7400.)

FRANÇOIS-XAVIER SEREN
As a photographer for the French society magazine *Point de Vue et Images du Monde*, Seren glories in his proximity to his aristocratic subjects and their eccentricities. The Marquis d'Amat, holding a pet rabbit, observes the viewer through tinted glasses over a chessboard at Versailles; the Duc d'Orléans wiggles his extraordinarily bushy eyebrows; and the Comtesse de Paris sits regally in a high-necked dress. The prints—particularly the candids, which sometimes look like a corporate photographer's convention shots—don't pretend to be more than the quick work of a journalist, but the subjects, and some lively compositions, bear scrutiny. Through July 21. (M.Y. Art Prospects, 135 W. 29th St. 268-7132.)

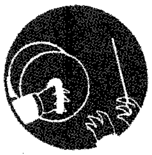
"TURISMO"
For the most recent Havana Biennial, last November, the Argentine artists Leandro Erlich and Judi Werthein brought snow to Cuba—or rather, a more portable equivalent, powdered Styrofoam. They also brought skis, a sled, and an Alpine backdrop. Then they invited ordinary Cubans to ham it up for the camera with props including faux snowballs. The resulting Polaroids have an appealing, county-fair silliness. But condescension hovers, like a cold front, in the background. Through Aug. 2. (Kent, 67 Prince St. 966-4500.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (860-1777)—Sebastião Salgado's **"Migrations: Humanity in Transition."** Over the past seven years, Salgado has visited more than thirty-five countries, travelling with and photographing some of the nearly one hundred million migrants now wandering the planet. Viewers who follow international news may be familiar not only with the trouble spots he's been to—Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia among them—but also with these images, some of which have appeared in major American news magazines. Nevertheless, the effect of seeing them, particularly the sweeping landscapes, in immaculate black-and-white prints filling large, open galleries, remains powerful. Finally I.C.P.'s new space hosts a show in line with its original founding mission—to champion the aesthetic and moral virtues of reportage—a show that demonstrates the scale and focus that differentiate it from other venues. Through Sept. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10-5; Fridays, 10-8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10-6.)

Short List

KONRAD CRAMER
Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223.
Through Aug. 3.
"A DOG AND PONY SHOW"
Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223.
Through Aug. 3.
"GONE MISSING: BRITISH CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY"
Frederieke Taylor, 535 W. 22nd St.
646-230-0992. Through Aug. 1.
"MAGNUM: A COMMUNITY OF THOUGHT"
Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010.
Through Aug. 4.

CLASSICAL NOTES



IVORY HUNTERS
Lukas Foss was barely out of his teens during the halcyon period of American composition in the nineteen-forties. He was considered a piano prodigy when he composed the first of his two bracingly inventive concertos, both of which have been revived on a new Harmonia Mundi release. (He wrote the second at the age of twenty-eight.) The American pianist Jon Nakamatsu brings a sunny, robust lyricism to the Concerto No. 1, a witty expansion on the neo-Baroque idiom of Foss's teacher, Paul Hindemith; Yakov Kasman, a young Russian, delivers the jagged and percussive rhythms of the Concerto No. 2 with a fine, Slavic smokiness. Both pianists receive superb support from the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Carl St. Clair.

A stunning new recording of William Bolcom's Pulitzer Prize-winning "Twelve New Études" (1977-86) features Christopher Taylor, an American pianist who is gaining a cult following for his eagerness to tackle the most daunting modern music. Bolcom's virtuoso études, a postmodern answer to the nineteenth-century barn burners of Chopin and Liszt, revel in popular styles that range from ragtime to blues to old-timey, Italianate melodrama. They require a pianist of equally nimble intelligence and imagination—not to mention physical endurance—and Taylor is more than up to the challenge. The disk also includes another suite, "Turning," by the eclectic young composer Derek Bermel. (The album may be purchased on the Web at www.jonathandigital.com, or by calling 845-658-3726.)

Blockbuster versions of Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" choke the catalogue, but a disk featuring the composer's four-hand reduction of the score is a genuine novelty. The young Turkish pianist Fazil Say worked ten years to master the piece's driving extravagance, and, thanks to the wizardry of overdubbing, which allows him to "accompany" himself in a fully transcribed version of the orchestral score, he has pulled off a tour de force on the Teldec label. (Prepared-piano effects, imitating percussion or pizzicato strings, are a delicious surprise.) In stripping down this explosive score to its raw essentials, Say brings us back to the excitement of those notorious first performances, in 1913, when "The Rite"'s first listeners, taken aback by its terrible beauty, got their first taste of how the rest of the century would sound.

—*Russell Platt*

CLASSICAL MUSIC
OPERA

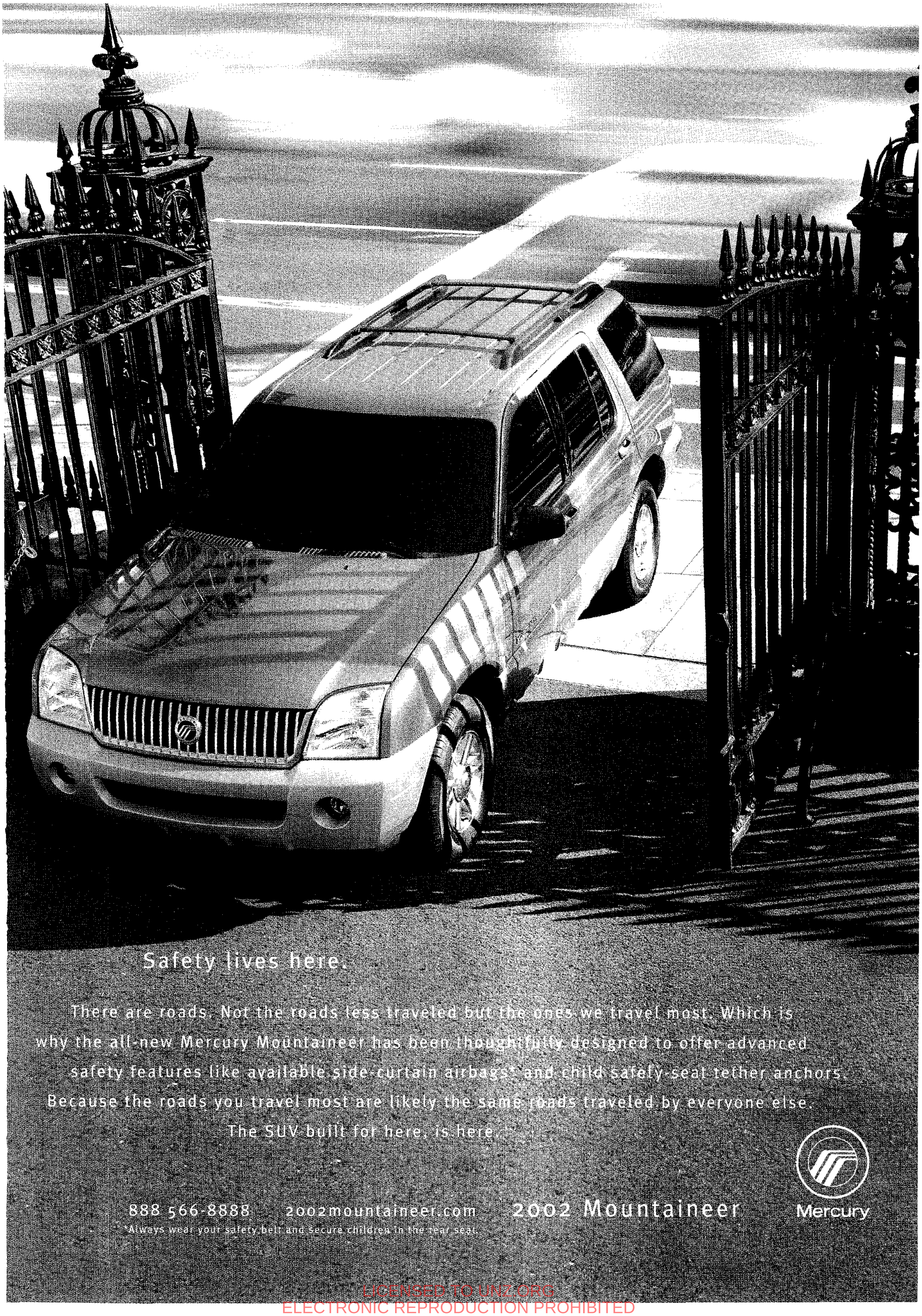
OPERA FESTIVAL OF NEW JERSEY
July 13 at 8: Puccini's **"Turandot,"** with Anna Shafajinskaia (in the title role), Allan Glassman, Theresa Cincione, and Scott Altman; Michael Ching conducts. Through July 26. ♦ July 14 at 8: A double bill of Dallapiccola's **"Il Prigioniero"** and Bartók's **"Bluebeard's Castle,"** with Victor Benedetti, Randolph Locke, Dean Peterson, and Eleni Matos; Patrick Hansen. ♦ July 15 at 2: Gluck's **"Orfeo ed Euridice,"** directed by Karen Tiller. The mezzo-soprano Margaret Lattimore and the soprano Christine Brandes take the title roles; David Agler conducts. Through July 29. (McCarter Theatre, Princeton, N.J. 609-258-2787.)

LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL
Three new music-theatre productions complete their runs. July 12-14 at 8: **"White Raven,"** an opera by the composer Philip Glass and the director-designer Robert Wilson with a libretto by Luísa Costa Gomes. This rich, whimsical historical fantasy, about Vasco da Gama and the Age of Discovery, is a fine vehicle for Glass and Wilson, who fill it out with extravagant costumes, mythical settings, and an affectingly lyrical score. Sung in Portuguese, with English supertitles. Dennis Russell Davies conducts the American Composers Orchestra. (New York State Theatre.) ♦ July 12-13 at 8: **"EDDA: Viking Tales of Lust, Revenge, and Family,"** the singer Benjamin Bagby's starkly beautiful reconstruction of the world of Old Norse sagas, performed with the singers and instrumentalists of Ensemble Sequentia and with actors from Ping Chong and Company. Chanted and sung in Old Norse, with English supertitles. (John Jay College Theatre, Tenth Ave. at 58th St.) ♦ July 12-14 at 8:30: In **"Luci Mie Traditrici"** ("My Treacherous Eyes"), a chamber opera by Salvatore Sciarrino, an aristocratic couple, wrapped in white Edwardian clothing and a bluish haze of light, enact a drama of sex, betrayal, and murder, loosely based on an episode in the life of the Renaissance composer Gesualdo. The spare, evocative staging is by Trisha Brown. (LaGuardia High School Drama Theatre, Amsterdam Ave. at 65th St. For tickets to all productions, call 721-6500.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS IN THE PARKS
William Eddins conducts Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 and a bouquet of Bernstein, featuring the violinist Joshua Bell. Fireworks follow each concert; no tickets are necessary. (Van Cortlandt Park, the Bronx. July 12 at 8. ♦ Cunningham Park, Queens. July 13 at 8. ♦ Westchester Community College, Valhalla, N.Y. July 14 at 8.) ♦ Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's picaresque "sung ballet," "The Seven Deadly Sins"—which eventually became a vehicle for Weill's widow, the cigarette-voiced Lotte Lenya—is the highlight of the Philharmonic's second program, featuring the soprano Audra McDonald as Anna. Michael Stern conducts a concert version of the work, with a male quartet serving as the heroine's family (the role of Mother is sung by a bass). The rest of the evening is stocked with orchestral showpieces by Ravel and Johann Strauss II. (The Great Lawn, Central Park. July 16 at 8. ♦ PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, N.J. July 17 at 8.)

JUPITER SYMPHONY
Jens Nygaard begins a three-concert summer series at the 45 Bleecker Theatre, celebrating the music of Mozart and Bach. The first program features Mozart's Symphony No. 26 and Horn Concerto No. 3, along with Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 and—since no Nygaard concert would be complete without dessert—the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria." (45 Bleecker St., at Lafayette St. 799-1259. July 16 at 8.)



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RECITALS

LIONHEART
The male choral quintet offers French music from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. (Trinity Church, Broadway at Wall Street. July 12 at 1. No tickets necessary.)

ANNE QUEFFÉLEC
A program of music by Scarlatti, Schubert (the Sonata in C Minor, D. 958), Ravel ("Miroirs"), and Liszt from the French pianist, who is making her New York recital début. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. July 12 at 5:45.)

ROBERT WHITE AND DICK HYMAN
The tenor and the jazz pianist (here on Hammond organ), both of whom started their careers in radio's golden age, offer a memory-lane program of pop songs from the nineteen-twenties through the fifties. (Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. 590-0333. July 13 at 6:30.)

SUMMERGARDEN
Music by Stravinsky, Villa-Lobos, Tania León, and others is the focus of the next concert in the Juilliard School's summer modern-music series, played by the pianist Ofra Yitzhaki and the percussionist Eric Poland. (Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. July 13-14 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

NEWPORT MUSIC FESTIVAL
This busy festival offers a host of concerts, given in the old yachting town's grand summer "cottages." Several in the coming week are devoted to music by Dvořák, the festival's featured composer; other events include an evening of operatic fantasies for voices and chamber ensembles and "Onion Domes," a program of exotic Russian works. The performers include the violinists Kerry McDermott and Geoff Nuttall and the pianist Piotr Anderszewski. (Newport, R.I. For more information, call 401-849-0700. Through July 22.)

TANGLEWOOD
July 11 at 8:30: The baritone Matthias Goerne and the pianist Eric Schneider present Schubert's "Die Schöne Müllerin." ♦ July 12 at 8:30: Chanticleer, an extraordinary male chorus, sings works by Monteverdi, Victoria, and the Native American composer Brent Michael Davids and music from Cuba. ♦ July 13 at 8:30: Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos's second program at the Shed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra combines childlike innocence, in the form of Mendelssohn's incidental music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with the sensual abandon of Orff's "Carmina Burana," positively for adults only. A chamber concert in Ozawa Hall, featuring members of the B.S.O., precedes the orchestral concert at 6. ♦ July 14 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducts Dvořák's Cello Concerto (with Yo-Yo Ma) and John Corigliano's Symphony No. 2, this year's winner of the Pulitzer Prize for music. ♦ July 15 at 2:30: Goerne comes to the Shed to sing Mahler's "Rückert Lieder" with the B.S.O., part of a grab-bag program of Britten, Ravel, and Saint-Saëns (the First Cello Concerto, with the young virtuoso Han-Na Chang). James Conlon conducts. ♦ July 17 at 8:30: John Williams conducts the Boston Pops Orchestra in music by Harry Warren (whose work moves the dancing feet of Broadway's "42nd Street") and, of course, himself. (Lenox, Mass. 617-266-1200.)

CARAMOOR FESTIVAL
July 12 at 4:30: Members of Caramoor's Young Artists Ensemble sing the last of two concerts devoted to scenes and arias from the bel-canto operas of Verdi and Bellini, presented in a semi-staged format. ♦ July 13 at 8:00: The Mendelssohn Quartet (with the violist Maria Lambors) performs Brahms's joyous String Quintet No. 2, along with music by Dvořák and Bernard Rands. ♦ July 14 at 8: The cellist Alisa Weilerstein, a young artist of distinguished lineage (her father, Donald, was the longtime first violinist of the Cleveland Quartet), is rapidly emerging as a passionate player with strong ideas. She teams up for Shostakovich's incendiary First Cello Concerto with Yves Abel, a French conductor of impeccable dramatic instincts, who fills out the program with music by Beethoven, Bizet, and Cherubini. With the Orchestra of St. Luke's. ♦ July 15 at 4:30: The fine young Avalon String Quartet teams up with a gaggle of wind players for a midsummer afternoon of Mozart divertimenti. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

GLIMMERGLASS OPERA
July 14 at 8: Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro," directed by Stephen Lawless. Dean Ely, Joyce Guyer, Nicole Heaston, Valerie Komar, and Christopher Schaldenbrand take the leading roles; George Manahan conducts. ♦ July 15 at 2: Chabrier's "L'Étoile," directed by Mark Lamos, with Torrance Blaisdell, Karina Gauvin, and Christine Abraham; Stewart Robertson. (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
July 14 at 8: The Tokyo String Quartet, longtime favorites at Norfolk, return for a concert of Brahms and Dutilleux, with the pianist Joan Panetti. (Ellen Battell Stoeckel Estate, Routes 44 and 272, Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000.)

MUSIC FESTIVAL OF THE HAMPTONS
July 13 at 8: Mary Cleere Haran and her accompanist, Richard Rodney Bennett, perform classic American songs from their act at the Café Carlyle. ♦ July 15 at 8: A sampler of twentieth-century chamber music, including works by Bartók, Xenakis, and the composer-pianist Lukas Foss, who performs with members of the Atlantic Chamber Orchestra. ♦ July 16 at 8: The baritone Scott Murphee and the pianist Alvin Novak present a variety of American art songs. (Festival Tent, Snakehollow Rd., Bridgehampton, N.Y. For more information, call 307-7171.)

MARLBORO MUSIC FESTIVAL
Marlboro may be the most austere of the great American festivals—no gift shop, no air-conditioning—but the crowds still come every year to hear some of the world's greatest musicians (and their very talented students) play the classics of the German repertory in a relaxed, collegial atmosphere. The first concert, including music by Bach, will feature the festival's artistic directors, the pianists Mitsuko Uchida and Richard Goode. (July 14 at 8:30.) ♦ Leon Kirchner conducts the chamber version of Copland's "Appalachian Spring." (Marlboro, Vt. 802-254-2394. July 15 at 2:30. Through Aug. 12.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
The Jacques Thibaud String Trio returns (with the pianist Peter Basquin and the bassist Alvin Brehm) for music by Brahms, Hummel, and Françaix. (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. July 15 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"NOSTALGIA TRAIN"
What do wicker seats, ceiling fans, and flappers have in common? All three were once found on the subway in New York City. Back in 1927, D-Type Triplexes (three discrete cars with shared trucks, hence the name) were introduced beneath local streets. The Triplexes remained in service until 1965. On July 15 at 10 A.M., the New York Transit Museum rolls out its vintage fleet of the cars. The trains run from Columbus Circle to Rockaway Park, with one stop at the museum's headquarters (a nineteen-thirties-era decommissioned station in Brooklyn Heights). It's an express trip back in time. For more information, call 718-243-8601.

READINGS
July 16 at 7:30: By the playwright Suzan-Lori Parks, from her new play "Topdog/Underdog." (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ July 16 at 7: By Michael Capuzzo, from "Close to Shore," his account of a 1916 shark scare along the New Jersey coastline. (Half King, 505 W. 23rd St. No tickets necessary.)

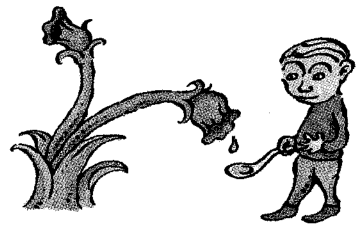
TALK
July 15 at 1 and 3: The biologist Lisa M. Austin gives an illustrated lecture on the bioluminescent life in New York Harbor. It's there, really. (South Street Seaport. 12-14 Fulton St. 748-8600.)

TOUR
July 11 at 10: The Regional Plan Association offers a guided walking tour of Governors Island. To register, which is required, call 253-2727, ext. 393.

BOOK CURRENTS

Encyclopedia Botanica

Not for nothing is herbology characterized as a branch of traditional medicine. In **MEDIEVAL HERBALS** (Toronto), Minta Collins shows that treatises on the medical uses of plants date back to the work of the Greek physician Dioscorides in the first century A.D. Dioscorides' teachings formed the basis of Western herbal writings for a millennium and a half, while the illustrations grew from rudimentary diagrams to the sophisticated depictions in late-medieval codices, in which varieties of plants are clearly—and beautifully—visible.

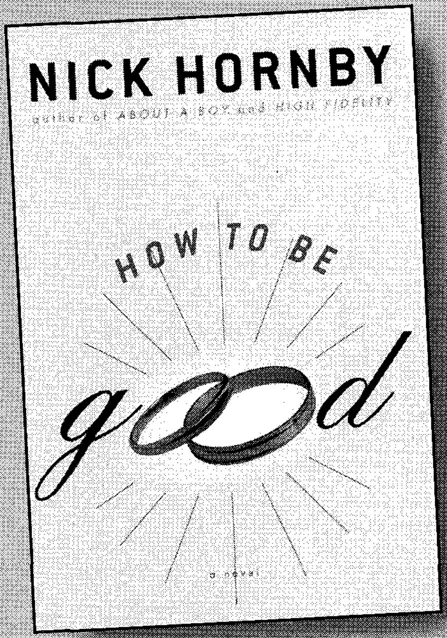


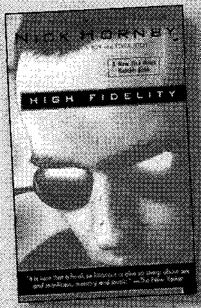
SERGIO RUZZIER

Botanical verisimilitude reached new heights in the Renaissance. Claudia Swan points out that in Albrecht Dürer's watercolor "The Large Piece of Turf" not only are all the plants readily identifiable but knowledegable observers can also identify the month as May. In **THE CLUTIUS BOTANICAL WATERCOLORS** (Abrams), Swan makes selections from some eighteen hundred botanical watercolors collected by the wealthy sixteenth-century Dutch pharmacist Theodorus Clutius. While depicting leaves, roots, flowers, and fruits with scientific accuracy, the exquisite designs also foreshadow the Dutch flower paintings and tulipomania of the following century.

By the time the German-born Pennsylvanian Christopher Sauer published his compendium of herbal remedies, in the mid-eighteenth century, Enlightenment science was already making his approach obsolete. Perhaps this is why the work has only now been translated, as **SAUER'S HERBAL CURES** (Routledge), by William Woys Weaver. Weaver points out that Sauer provided vital advice to those who could not afford medical attention. Tarragon, we're told, is good against cancer. Hearing loss can be cured by funnelling steam from cooked broad beans into the ear. And endive controls "passionate lusting for unchaste things."

—*Leo Carey*


NICK HORNBY
author of ABOUT A BOY and HIGH FIDELITY
HOW TO BE
good
a novel


NICK HORNBY
HIGH FIDELITY

MUSIC

Pop music junkie Rob just broke up with his girlfriend, who happens to have the lamest record collection. His journey back to the relationship takes him into the very heart of the modern male psyche.

HIGH FIDELITY
by Nick Hornby
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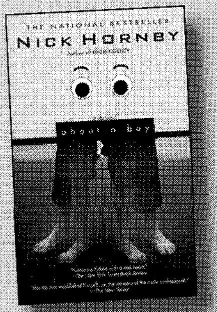
Our Price: $10.36
Readers' Advantage Price: $9.32


THE NATIONAL BESTSELLER
NICK HORNBY
about a boy

TEMPTED

Will Freeman picks up dates at a single parents support group. One catch, though: he doesn't have kids. The scheme works great until he meets a twelve-year-old boy who will change everything.

ABOUT A BOY
by Nick Hornby
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NICK HORNBY
SPEAKING WITH THE ANGEL

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Nick Hornby edited this collection of twelve original stories from the most celebrated voices in fiction today, including Dave Eggers, Zadie Smith, Roddy Doyle, Melissa Bank, and Nick himself.

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MOVIES OPENING

ADANGGAMAN
A historical drama about the West African slave trade, directed by the Ivory Coast-born filmmaker Roger Gnoan M'Bala. In Bambara, Baule, and French. Opening July 11. (Film Forum.)

BULLY
Larry Clark ("Kids") directed this drama based on the true story of a group of teens who laid a trap for their home-town bully. With Nick Stahl, Bijou Phillips, and Brad Renfro. Opening July 13.

DOWNTOWN 81
Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening July 13. (The Screening Room.)

FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN
An adaptation of the science-fiction video game, directed by its creator, Hironobu Sakaguchi. The characters are computer-animated, with voices by Steve Buscemi, Alec Baldwin, Donald Sutherland, and others. Opening July 11.

LEGALLY BLONDE
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening July 13.

MADE
Jon Favreau directs and plays a lead role in this comedy about lifelong friends who get a chance to join the Mob. With Vince Vaughn, Sean (Puffy) Combs, Famke Janssen, and Peter Falk. Opening July 13.

PANDAEMONIUM
A drama about the friendship and rivalry between William Wordsworth (John Hannah) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (Linus Roache). Directed by Julien Temple. Opening July 13.

THE SCORE
Frank Oz directed this crime comedy in which a young man (Edward Norton) blackmails a retired thief (Robert De Niro) into pulling off a major heist. With Marlon Brando and Angela Bassett. Opening July 13.

FILM NOTES

A.I.
An extraordinarily accomplished failure. After dithering with this project for years, Stanley Kubrick bequeathed it to Steven Spielberg, who wrote his own screenplay after Kubrick's death. In the bleak world that remains after the polar ice cap has melted, David (Haley Joel Osment), a perfect-child robot programmed to love, so disturbs his neurotic mother (Frances O'Connor) that she turns him loose in the woods. There he hooks up with a friendly stud-gigolo robot (Jude Law, who is certainly more beautiful than anything human). At that point, the movie should have taken off as the story of a science-fiction Pinocchio—a toy who wants to be human—but "A.I." is surprisingly bitter. The robots are preyed upon by humans, who destroy them at disgusting W.W.F.-type revels called Flesh Fairs. One senses a Kubrickian joke: the humans are empty and cruel, the robots sensitive and noble. Yet it's a nonfunctioning irony, and perhaps the last example of Kubrick's famous misanthropy. Despite many touching and uncanny moments, and some extraordinary visual invention (the scene of robots searching for new limbs and faces might have been created by Salvador Dali), "A.I.," which appears to celebrate the end of human existence, leaves one in a depressed stupor. With Sam Robards and William Hurt. Cinematography by Janusz Kaminski.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 7/2/01.) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Coronet Cinema, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia I and II, Orpheum VII, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

THE ANNIVERSARY PARTY
Alan Cumming as a charming but volatile bisexual writer who is about to direct a big-budget movie; Jennifer Jason Leigh as a neurotic actress who screws up her roles by turning everything into tragedy. In Los Angeles, they throw an anniversary party, invite their friends, get tanked, and then take Ecstasy, at which point everything begins to fall apart. Cumming and Jason Leigh wrote and directed this house-party picture together, and shot it quickly in digital video with various friends and colleagues (Kevin Kline, Phoebe Cates, Gwyneth Paltrow, Parker Posey). The movie has the kind of intensity that actors love—scenes of confrontation, breakdown, and self-revelation—but it's neither well constructed nor particularly original.—*D.D.* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.)

ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE
This animated feature adds little to Disney's tradition of technical virtuosity, but it does subtract one thing: the songs. Presumably this was done to make the movie more palatable to adults driven mad by ten thousand replays of "Be Our Guest." The story also has some grownup elements, like characters who die, though they mostly do so offscreen or in blinding flashes of white light. An inventor named Milo (voiced by Michael J. Fox) gets plucked from the boiler room to lead a mission to discover Atlantis. The story won't surprise you, but in a bleak summer season it at least has the merit of being coherent. Some of the sequences have an epic grandeur, especially the battle with the supersized lobster that guards the underwater city's entrance.—*Michael Agger* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

BABY BOY
A failed attempt at epic family-film-making by the writer-director John Singleton. The singer Tyrese Gibson stars as a whiny, going-nowhere man living in South Central L.A. with his mom and her boyfriend (A. J. Johnson and Ving Rhames, in strong performances). The drama is written in a style where every line is meant to convey something important, and the heavy-handed life lessons that Singleton doles out are unconvincing. He means to explore the directionless lives of young men who refuse to shoulder responsibility, but he's made a movie as meandering as one of his lost souls.—*Bruce Diones* (Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Union Square.)

BAISE-MOI
A would-be shocker from France. Two women on the margins—a waif (Raffaela Anderson) and a prostitute (Karen Bach)—hit the road and go on a binge of screwing and senseless killing. The spectacle is meant to be stunningly amoral, yet the movie, from scene to scene, and from shot to shot, is such an incoherent mess that it has almost no emotional impact. The directors Virginie Despentes (who adapted her own novel) and Coralie Trinh Thi undress everybody and spill lots of blood; they must have thought they would compromise the purity of their violence by learning basic moviemaking.—*D.D.* (Cinema Village.)

THE BLUE ANGEL
In this 1928 film, the director Josef von Sternberg and the actor Emil Jannings set in motion the Marlene Dietrich myth that was eventually to surpass their fame. As a night-club singer, Dietrich's smoldering voice and sadistic indifference suggest sex without romance, love, or sentiment. She's extraordinary, and "The Blue Angel" is a movie you can admire sequence by sequence, because it's made in an imaginative, atmospheric style, yet you may feel that you don't really like it on an emotional level; the sexual humiliation gets very heavy in the scenes in which the professor Dietrich seduced, now a clown, returns to his home town. In German.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum.)

CATS & DOGS
Small children should, given enough encouragement, enjoy Lawrence Guterman's homely fantasy, with its mixture of low, sniffing humor and high-tech effects. Jeff Goldblum and Elizabeth Perkins, who surely can't need the money that badly, play a couple who lose their pooch and replace it with a beagle. Like most beagles you know, this one is a first-time secret agent sent to foil a worldwide conspiracy of cats. The plot is Chihuahua-light, and there are many scenes that should have been scooped and thrown away: are we really supposed to laugh at an old guy in a wheelchair with an I.V. drip? The animals perform in contorted live-action, with the voices of Tobey Maguire, Susan Sarandon, and others issuing uncomfortably from canine lips. How can one movie be both cute and unutterably charmless? With Charlton Heston, brilliantly cast as a mastiff's growl, and Alexander Pollock as the nerdy kid from hell.—*Anthony Lane* (7/9/01) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.)

CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE CRIMSON RIVERS
A grim and tenebrous thriller from the young French director Matthieu Kassovitz. A mournful detective (Jean Reno) is summoned to an Alpine town, where local people have been turning up not only dead but bereft of vital components, such as eyes and hands. The place is home to a college so snotty and distinguished that the admissions procedure appears to be modelled on the creation of a master race; this policy is unlikely to be tried on the average American campus, but it leads our hero round some narrative twists of high absurdity. Kassovitz lets the film leak away from him; the spooky pacing of the first half is slowly abandoned, and Reno—who casts his usual dour spell—is forced to team up with a younger and less beguiling cop (Vincent Cassel). The final minutes, on a mountaintop, are a blizzard of implausibility. With Dominique Sanda as a blind nun. In French.—*A.L.* (7/9/01) (Angelika Film Center and Empire 25.)

DR. DOLITTLE 2
Eddie Murphy talks to the animals again in this mercifully short, briskly directed sequel to his 1998 hit. As wildlife's favorite veterinarian, Dolittle facilitates a romance between a circus bear (voiced by the incomparable Steve Zahn) and an endangered female bear (voiced sweetly by Lisa Kudrow) while trying to save a forest from destruction. It's a good-natured film that offers the welcome tonic of a blend of talented voices rising above the summer-movie bombast.—*B.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Olympia I and II, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, Union Square, and Waverly.)

DOWNTOWN 81
Jean Michel Basquiat starred in this New York fable in 1981, when he was nineteen. In the past few years, the film's art director (Maripol) and screenwriter (John McNulty) found some misplaced reels, redubbed some of the dialogue, and are just now releasing the patchwork result. The movie is set in a crumbling Lower East Side and captures Basquiat as a type of city dweller which isn't around much anymore. He's a great urban improviser, someone who walks the sidewalks unencumbered, finding inspiration in chance and accident. Deborah Harry of Blondie, Walter Steding, and Fab 5 Freddy all appear, and there are also performances by James White and the Blacks, the Plastics, DNA, and Melle Mel.—*M.A.* (The Screening Room.)

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THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Union Square, and Waverly.)

GOLDEN BOWL
Henry James made easy—no small task, given the complications of the plot. Prince Amerigo (Jeremy Northam) marries Maggie Verver (Kate Beckinsale), whose father, Adam Verver (Nick Nolte), then marries Maggie's friend Charlotte Stant (Uma Thurman). No one has a clue what anyone else is up to, let alone what happened before the marriage craze set in. In the book, such innocence seems like one of the infinite velleities of its atmosphere; onscreen, you have half a mind to slap the characters awake. This is a Merchant-Ivory production, so it looks as luscious as ever, though the actors display an unaccustomed shudder of neurosis; the honorable exception is Nick Nolte, who gives a growling depth to his depiction of the self-made man. Not much happens, although it is cunningly camouflaged as excess; why have a boring party, the film suggests, when you can make it a costume party and have people wear suits of armor?—*A.L.* (5/7/01) (64th and 2nd and Village East Cinemas.)

KISS OF THE DRAGON
The tiny, mild-looking Jet Li, playing a Chinese secret agent, shows up in Paris and joins a team of rogue French cops led by Tchécky Karyo, who rushes about like a madman, screaming profanities in English. Gone are the balletic wonders of the Hong Kong cinema. Westernizing the genre, Luc Besson (who wrote and produced; the film was directed by Chris Nahon) shoots up the lobby of the Ritz and destroys an innocent *bateau-mouche* cruising the Seine. Jet Li is fun to watch, but in a series of absurdly bloody battles he winds up killing most of the Paris police. Bridget Fonda rather desperately tries to hang on as a battered prostitute. Some of the cinematography, by Thierry Arbogast, is stylishly dark and moody, but by the time you notice it you may be past caring.—*D.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER
Guns strapped to her thighs, her lower lip as radically cleft as Kirk Douglas's chin, Angelina Jolie leaps and bungee-jumps her way through action sequences as Lara Croft, upper-class English adventuress. Jolie is cocksure and insinuating; she gets by just fine on pure attitude—acting isn't required. Unfortunately, the wit of the movie resides entirely in her face and body. Simon West is the unimaginative, humorless director; the movie was "written" by Patrick Massett and John Zinman.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema 1 and 2, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

LIFE AND DEBT
This documentary, directed by Stephanie Black, concerns the effects of globalization and multinational corporations on the island of Jamaica. What could have been a dry-as-dirt lecture on the evils of banking, the closings of farms, and unfair import practices gets shaped by the filmmaker into a comprehensive and involving film about the pillaging of a beautiful island and its people. The poetic, incisive narration is by Jamaica Kincaid.—*B.D.* (The Screening Room.)

LUMUMBA
Raoul Peck tells the story of the African freedom fighter Patrice Lumumba with fire and grace. The opening scene sets the vérité tone with the sound of a saw cutting through bone; two Belgian soldiers are breaking down Lumumba's body and incinerating it in a ten-gallon drum. From there, the film backtracks to the origins of the Congolese independence movement and proceeds to explain how a man's legacy could be considered so threatening, even in death. Peck handles all of this, including the atrocities, with refinement, and lets the drama of Lumumba's story run smoothly, free of heavy historical detail. Eric Ebouaney is extraordinary in the lead role, the production feels emotionally true, and the speeches generate spontaneous applause. Only the ending comes off as too hopeful, as we know that with Lumumba's death, the regime of Mobuto began. In French and Lingala.—*M.A.* (BAM Rose Cinemas and Film Forum.)

MEMENTO
Guy Pearce plays Leonard, a former insurance investigator who has mislaid his short-term memory; leave the room and come back ten minutes later, and he won't remember you. To help his case, and to solve the apparent murder of his wife, Leonard tattoos himself with memoranda and drives around the lowlier districts of L.A. County. At the same time, he has a couple of acquaintances (Carrie-Anne Moss and Joe Pantoliano) who use his condition for their own unscrupulous ends. There is a fine, despairing comedy to these events—not just in our fidgety hero but in the constant thwarting of our need to know. The young British writer and director Christopher Nolan, who has every intention of putting us through the mill, doubles his fun by running the whole story backward.—*A.L.* (3/19/01) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

MOULIN ROUGE
A frantically ambitious postmodernist musical in which no single song is performed from beginning to end and no dance number is staged without the dancers' movements being kaleidoscoped into a dozen angles. Set in a stylized and digitalized Paris, the movie offers the Moulin Rouge night club as a seething Belle Époque Studio 54, where a fresh-from-the-provinces poet named Christian (Ewan McGregor) falls in love with Satine (Nicole Kidman), a consumptive cancan dancer and courtesan. The story is no more than a flimsy outline, but it still manages to combine the Orpheus myth and "Camille" and to vaguely evoke about a dozen other films. Baz Luhrmann, the director, has a talent for décor, sudden shifts in perspective, and gentle, twinkling nighttime effects, but he whips much of the movie into an opéra-bouffe clownishness.—*D.D.* (5/28/01) (Battery Park 16, Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Murray Hill Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Village East Cinemas.)

PEARL HARBOR
At three hours, the new Michael Bay film lasts longer than the historical event it purports to describe. Ben Affleck and Josh Hartnett star as a couple of boyhood friends—one bumptious, the other shy—who join the Air Force together, play aerial chicken together, and even fall in love with the same girl (Kate Beckinsale). They also manage to get a couple of planes airborne and knock out some Japanese Zeros, a feat that is no less noble for being untroubled by historical fact. The movie feels big and baggy rather than epic, and, by the end, the stitching has come apart; you never quite believe in the spate of digital effects, let alone in the weaving of war and romance.—*A.L.* (6/4/01) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village East Cinemas.)

THE PRINCESS AND THE WARRIOR
Two damaged people—a sweet-tempered nurse (Franka Potente) who lives and works in a psychiatric ward and a surly tough guy (Benno Fürmann) mysteriously waylaid by sadness—are drawn together, seemingly by fate. But isn't fate just another name for an overlapping pattern of need and desire? Writer-director Tom Tykwer, who earlier made "Run Lola Run," works less kinetically this time. He varies the tempo: there are meditative passages punctuated by abrupt outbreaks of emotion—a mesmerizing new style that draws us into mysteries in an intuitive rather than explicit way. A strange, accomplished, and, finally, touching romantic drama. In German.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

SEXY BEAST
A tale of expatriate Cockneys, dry-roasted by the Spanish sun and determined to get England off their backs. Gal (Ray Winstone), once a crook, and his wife, Deedee (Amanda Redman), once a porno star, have retired to the Costa del Sol; now they are tracked down by an old acquaintance, Don (Ben Kingsley), who invites Gal back home for one last crime. Jonathan Glazer, the young British director making his début feature, turns the first half of the picture into a cool study of hotheads, saturated with creative cursing; the second half, which finds Gal returning to London, stumbles and slides into the grim traditions of gangsterland. But the movie needs to be seen for its clean compositions, its sure touch of fantasy, and, above all, for the forbidding presence of Kingsley—the prince of darkness, lightly disguised as a human being.—*A.L.* (6/18 & 25/01) (Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Union Square.)

SHREK
The Shrek of the title is a bile-green ogre with disgusting personal habits and, this being an animated feature, an essential sweetness of nature. The new DreamWorks production is overtly snook-cocking, turning every available fairy tale on its head: the princess has a short temper and karate skills, the dragon has the hots for a donkey, and the lord's castle is as tacky as a theme park. On the other hand, the film itself is hardly rough and real; however cunning the rendering of surfaces, there's still something flat and charmless in the digital look, and most of the pleasure rises not from the main romance but from the quick, incidental gags. With voices by Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz, Eddie Murphy, and John Lithgow.—*A.L.* (5/21/01) (Battery Park 16, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, and Union Square.)

THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE
Luis Buñuel's style here is peerlessly urbane, but this 1977 film is a little monotonous. Fernando Rey plays a rich, worldly French widower of perhaps fifty, who loves a Spanish girl; she alternates between promises and postponement—she teases him, fleeces him, enrages him. In this fifth movie version of "La Femme et le Pantin," Pierre Louÿs's short novel about a femme fatale, the role is played by two actresses—Carole Bouquet, a tall French girl, poker-faced except for a squint of amusement and a foxy, crooked smear of a smile, and Angela Molina, a shorter, more rounded Spanish girl, who's physically impulsive, and sensual in a traditional heavy-eyed way. This doubling-up stunt doesn't add any meaning: perhaps a single actress would have better captured our imaginations. Buñuel sets up the Louÿs story, then treats it glancingly as a joke to hang other jokes on—and his jokes now don't have the violence underneath to make connections for us. His style is too serene for his subject. In French.—*P.K.* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

WITH A FRIEND LIKE HARRY. . .
A smart new horror story, at once thrilling and upsetting, from the director Dominik Moll. Michel (Laurent Lucas), a typically fretful father on vacation with his wife and children, meets an old schoolmate named Harry (Sergi López), who promptly starts changing Michel's life for the better. This entails buying him a new car and then getting to work on his ornery parents, his tired wife, and his frustrated ambitions as a writer. You can't really fault Harry's logic, and that's what makes him so daunting; his analysis of Michel's messy existence would do for just about anyone. It's his homicidal methods that somehow feel de trop, although Michel can no more be rid of him than Othello could slip from the clutches of Iago. All this is told with a tight, nervy concentration. Anyone thinking of getting married and starting a family should probably stay clear of Moll's movie. As for driving around Europe, forget it. In French.—*A.L.* (5/7/01) (Cinema 3rd Avenue and Village East Cinemas.)

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Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St. (945-3418).
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600).
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through July 15: "Vulgar Genius: The Movies of Mel Brooks." July 14 at 2: "Young Frankenstein" (1974). ♦ July 14 at 4: "High Anxiety" (1977). ♦ July 15 at 2: "The History of the World, Part One" (1981). ♦ July 15 at 4: "Spaceballs" (1987). ♦ Repertory night. July 14-15 at 6:30: "M*A*S*H*" (1970, Robert Altman). ♦ At the Directors Guild Theatre (110 W. 57th St.) on July 17 at 7: "Stanley Kubrick: A Life in Pictures" (2001, Jan Harlan).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—July 12 at 7, July 13 at 11:30, July 14 at 3 and 7:30, July 15 at 3 and 9:15, July 16 at 7, and July 17 at 9:15: "Rock 'N' Roll High School" (1979, Allan Arkush). ♦ July 12 at 9, July 13 at 7, July 14 at 5 and 11:30, July 15 at 7, July 16 at 9, and July 17 at 7: "The Decline of Western Civilization" (1981, Penelope Spheeris). ♦ July 13 at 9:30, July 14 at 9:30, and July 15 at 5: "Head" (1969, Bob Rafelson).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (777-3456)—The yakuza movies of Kinji Fukasaku. All films are in Japanese. July 11 at 6:50 and 9:10: "Modern Yakuza—Outlaw Killer" (1972). ♦ July 12 at 6:50 and 9:10: "Gambler—Foreign Opposition" (1971). ♦ July 13 at 6:50 and 9:10: "Black Lizard" (1967). ♦ July 17 at 6:50 and 9:10: "High Noon for Gangsters" (1961). ♦ A series of the "best undistributed films." July 15-16 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "Xiao Wu" (1997, Jia Zhang-Ke; in Mandarin.)

BRYANT PARK
Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing. The feature on July 16 is "You Can't Take It with You" (1938, Frank Capra).

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through July 12: A Jan Svankmajer retrospective. July 11-12 at 1, 3:45, 6:30, and 9:15: "Conspirators of Pleasure" (1996). ♦ July 11-12 at 2:35, 5:20, and 8:05: "Unnatural Acts," five shorts (1966-92). ♦ July 13-17 at 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, and 9:50: "The Blue Angel" (†).

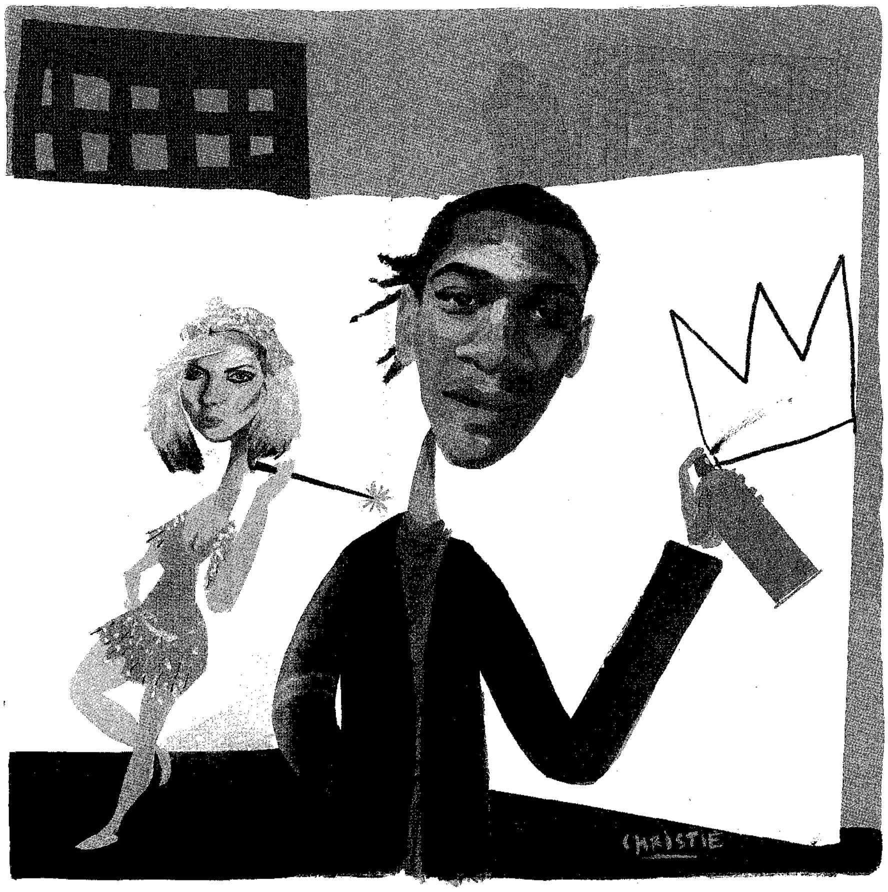
FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Through Aug. 14: "Women Behind the Camera." All films are in French. July 17 at 12:30 and 6:30: "Chocolat" (1988, Claire Denis). ♦ July 17 at 3:30 and 9: "Beau Travail" (1999, Denis).

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (360-4321)—Through July 28: Italian cinematography. July 13-14 at 7: "Chaos" (1984, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; in Italian). ♦ July 14 at 3: "Nostalghia" (1983, Andrej Tarkovsky; in Russian and Italian).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Through July 22: "Shaking Up the Box," a tribute to the Independent Television Service. July 12 at 3:30: "The City (La Ciudad)" (1999, David Riker). ♦ July 12 at 6: "Dottie Gets Spanked" (1994, Todd Haynes), "Figures of Speech" (1999, Bob Sabiston), and "Terminal, U.S.A." (1994, Jon Moritsugu). ♦ July 13 at 3:30 and July 15 at 1: "Kids Spots, Part I" (1994-99). ♦ July 13 at 6: "Leona's Sister Gerri" (1994, Jane Gillooly) and "Girls Like Us" (1997, Jane C. Wagner and Tina DiFeliciantonio). ♦ July 13 at 8:15: "Family Remains" (1993, Tamara Jenkins) and "The Devil Never Sleeps" (1996, Lourdes Portillo). ♦ July 14 at 3: "Coming Out Under Fire" (1994, Arthur Dong). ♦ July 14 at 5: "Bontoc Eulogy" (1996, Marlon Fuentes). ♦ July 15 at 3: "Chronicle of a Disappearance" (1996, Elia Suleiman). ♦ July 15 at 5: "If I Can't Do It" (1998, Walter Brock) and "School Prayer: A Community at War" (1999, Slawomir Grunberg). ♦ July 16 at 3:30: "United States of Poetry: Land and the People" (1995, Mark Pellington) and "Backbone of the World: The Blackfeet" (1997, George Burdeau). ♦ July 16 at 6: "Stranger with a Camera" (2000, Elizabeth Barrett). ♦ July 17 at 3:30: "Kids Spots, Part II" (1994-99), "Still Life with Animated Dogs" (2001, Paul Fierlinger), and "Death by Design" (1996, Peter Friedman and Jean-François Brunet). ♦ July 17 at 6: "W.I.S.O.R." (2000, Michel Negroponte).

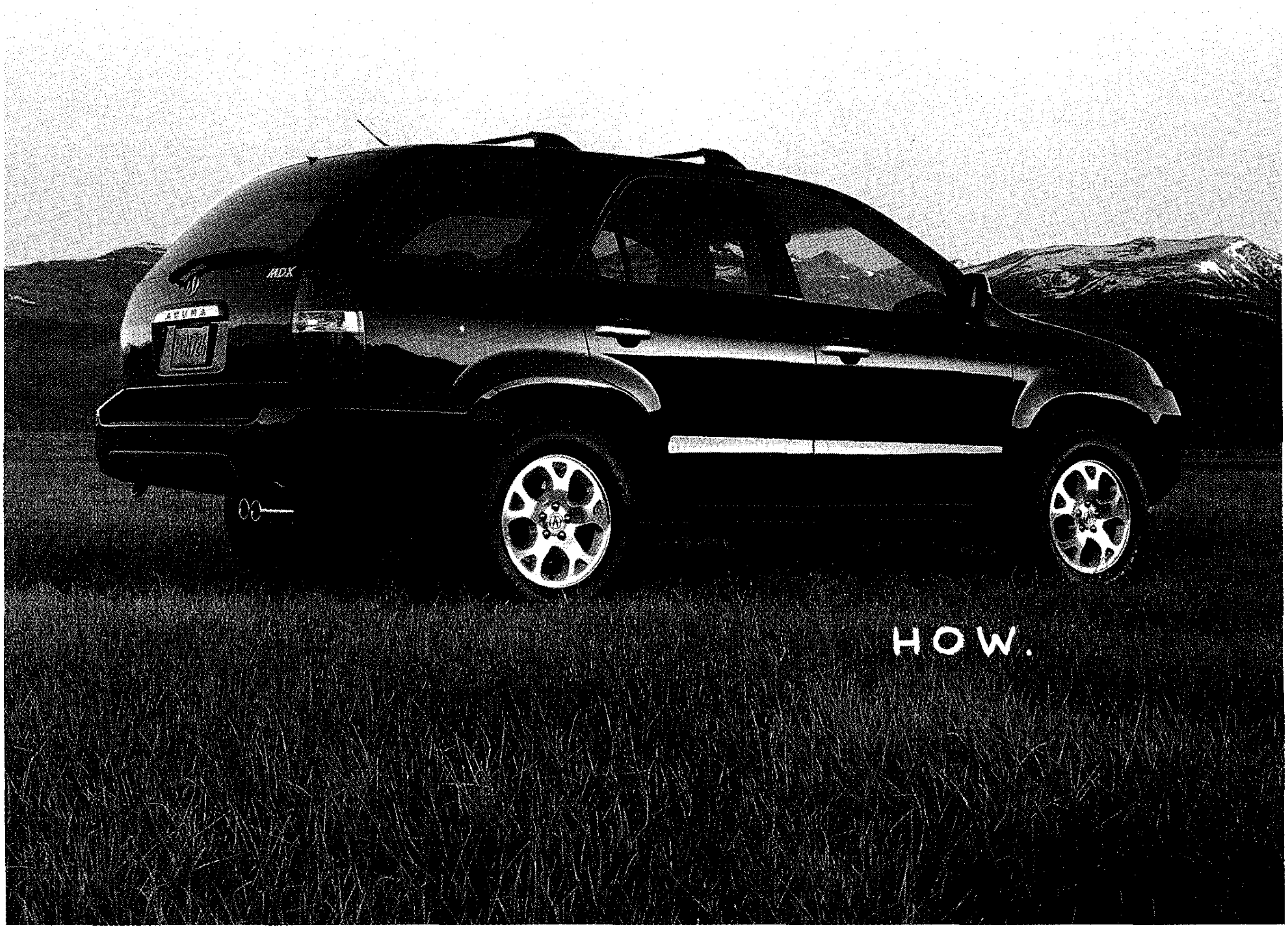
THE MUSEUM OF TELEVISION & RADIO
25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Through Sept. 16: "Hello, Goodbye," screenings of pilots, premières, and final episodes of classic television shows. Thursdays through Sundays at 3.

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through July 12: "Urban Ghosts and Legends: The Cinema of Tsai Ming-Liang" All films are in Taiwanese. July 11 at 2 and 6:15 and July 12 at 4:15 and 8:30: "My New Friends" (1995) and "Youngsters" (1991). ♦ July 11 at 4:15 and 8:30 and July 12 at 2:15 and 6:30: "The Hole" (1998). ♦ Starting July 13: The New York Video Festival.



Deborah Harry and Jean Michel Basquiat in "Downtown 81."

R. GREGORY CHRISTIE



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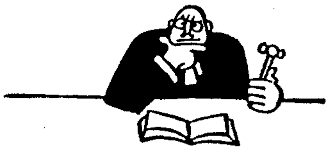
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

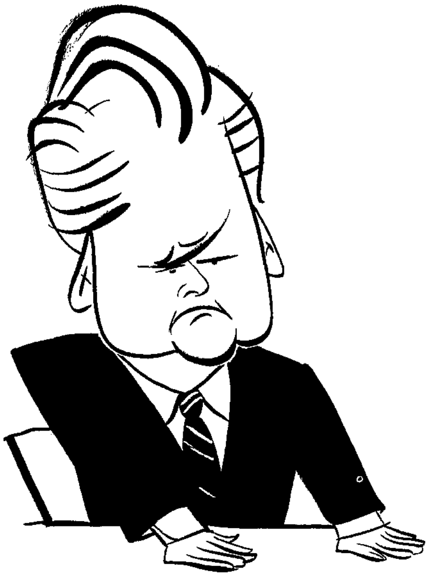
COMMENT
THE DEFENDANT



"That's your problem," growled the defendant, alone and unrepentant in the dock: Slobodan Milosevic, the former Yugoslav strongman and indicted war criminal, brought at long last before the bar of international justice. The presiding judge at The Hague, Richard May, of Great Britain, had asked Milosevic whether he preferred to waive the reading of the entire indictment, a fifty-four-page catalogue of hair-raising allegations relating to Serbia's campaign of ethnic persecution in Kosovo. Milosevic, having already refused to accept counsel or to enter a plea on the ground that the entire proceeding was illegitimate, spat out his one-line response. His defense strategy, it seemed, would be simple: contempt of court.

In the event, Judge May dispensed with the reading of the full indictment and, in keeping with the Tribunal's by-laws, entered a provisional not-guilty plea on Milosevic's behalf, whereupon he adjourned the proceedings until later in the summer. But Milosevic, ever the master tactician, had honed in on one of the Tribunal's shakiest stanchions: the question of its own still-consolidating legitimacy. Casting doubt on the Tribunal's very right to try him (or anyone else) will surely constitute one of Milosevic's principal gambits in the months ahead. The Tribunal was established by a vote of the Security Council in 1993 as binding on all members of the United Nations, Milosevic himself endorsed its prerogatives by signing the Dayton accords, and any specific remaining legal technicalities were settled in the Dusko Tadic case, the Tribunal's first, in 1996—but the question of fundamental even-handedness will remain. The Tribunal has been going to great lengths not only to be fair but to be seen as being fair, and just as Milosevic managed to temporize for years when he was in power (for instance, playing on President Clinton's Somalia trauma and the divided historic loyalties of the various NATO allies), he will be exploiting the Tribunal's anxieties regarding due process to tie the proceedings up in ever more absurd knots.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL



Slobodan Milosevic

What's more, the spookily imperious way in which Milosevic persists in denying the reality of his situation may not simply be a ploy to drive others crazy; it may be evidence of craziness, *tout court.* If he is finally forced to accept counsel, a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity may be his legal team's wisest course—and it may even be the most accurate one. Virtually everyone in the international community who ever dealt with Milosevic first hand came away convinced that the man (the scion of two suicides, entrenched in a bizarre marital folie à deux) was in some sense mad, whether certifiably so or not. We may soon find ourselves drifting into Unabomberland, with a manifestly brilliant defendant who may also be manifestly out of his mind but who refuses to countenance any discussion of his mental health. (Might not a similar problem have arisen, incidentally, if Hitler had lived to confront the Nuremberg Tribunal?)

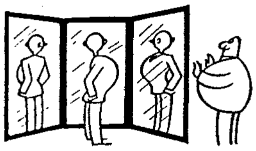
The Hague Tribunal will, in any case, face its own set of challenges. For starters, a Milosevic conviction may not be the foregone conclusion it appears to be. The problem with such prosecutions has always been that those who order the killing are seldom the ones who actually do it. (Sometimes they don't even technically do the ordering.) That's no problem if you're just dispensing victor's justice, but if you're aspiring to a higher standard—particularly one that would establish a sound foundation for a robust extension of international law—it's a very big problem indeed. It won't be easy to establish a chain of command from Belgrade to some gruesome charnel house outside Prijedor. The things that happened in Kosovo, and, before that, in Bosnia and Croatia, were certainly crimes, but they were many other things as well, and a strictly legalistic parsing of the matter may not afford the sort of discourse appropriate to the scale of the horror. (On the other hand, what else is there?)

All along, one of the Tribunal's principal rationales in the eyes of its proponents was its potential educative function. In finally establishing a set of facts, it was said, the Tribunal would compel the wider population back in the home country to come to terms with those facts in some kind of cathartic manner. But are Serbs, long in denial themselves, capable of such a catharsis—especially one prompted from The Hague? Or might they, expertly prodded along by Milosevic, continue to dismiss the entire exercise as further victimization by an international community bent on their endless vilification? Or, in what could be an even worse prospect, might they contrive to scapegoat Milosevic and the others as fiendish con artists who led them astray, thereby absolving themselves of any responsibility of their own? Similarly, the Tribunal's proponents have always signalled its putative deterrent power. We may be about to test that claim in Macedonia, which seems to be drifting inexorably toward civil war. Will the spectacle of some of the highest commanders of a recent nearby war being forced to answer for their depredations in fact give the current commanders pause before they engage in comparable acts?

Such concerns notwithstanding, the Tribunal's original claim to existence arose from a simple call: a calling out from the grave by all the tens of thousands of victims so brutally and senselessly butchered in the decade of mayhem over which Milosevic, among others, presided. That is the onus weighing on the jurists in The Hague, and on the rest of us. In the end, that's our charge.

—*Lawrence Weschler*

COSTUME DEPT.
THY NEIGHBOR'S FAT SUIT



Speaking last week from her office in West Hartford, Connecticut, Dr. Lisa Berzins, a psychologist and the director of the eating-disorders program at Manchester Memorial Hospital, revealed what a fellow-practitioner might call fat-suit envy. Dr. Berzins had noted the current Hollywood boom in heavily padded costumes (Martin Short's, in "Primetime Glick"; Julia Roberts's, in "America's Sweethearts"; and, later this year, Gwyneth Paltrow's, in the Farrelly brothers' "Shallow Hal"), and was acutely aware that not all fat suits are the same, and that hers is beginning to look a bit shabby. "I would love to get my hands on one of the more sophisticated suits," Dr. Berzins said. "To have a suit that was comfortable and realistic-looking and not so hot . . ."

Dr. Berzins has had her suit since 1994, when she was interviewed on a local television news series called "Fat and Forgotten," for which a reporter used a fat suit to investigate anti-fat prejudice. After the show, Dr. Berzins, who weighs about a hundred and fifteen pounds, begged to be given the suit. She now uses it when she gives lectures to schoolchildren. She arrives in the suit, which pushes her apparent weight to about two hundred and fifty pounds, and begins a talk on body image and the media. The students yawn and shift in their seats. Then she leaves the room for a moment, like Clark Kent. When she reappears without the suit, she suddenly has her audience's attention. A discussion ensues.

Jiminy Glick

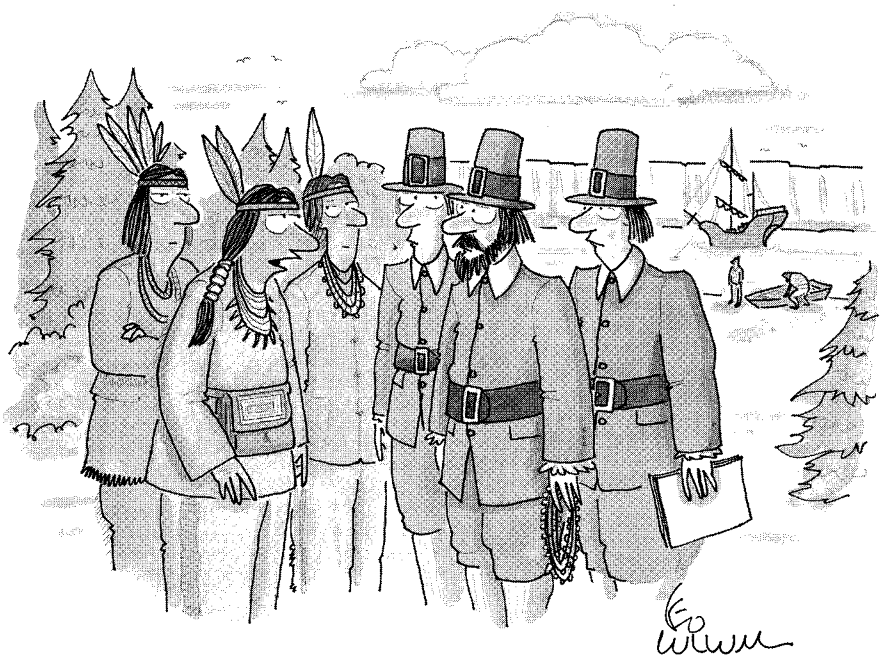
In the years since Dr. Berzins began performing sweaty quick-changes in high-school corridors, the entertainment industry seems to have discovered that although fat people may still be able to entertain an audience, the real money is in thin people—famously thin, professionally thin people—pretending to be fat (Courteney Cox Arquette, for example, on "Friends," seen in a teen-age flashback). Filling the space left by blackface, the fat suit is in its golden age, when it can be seen as a cute, sporting transgression against celebrity rather than as a scandalous insult to fat people. This is how famous people flirt with anonymity. (Michael Jackson used to wear a fat-suit disguise to make his visits to "real" homes in Southern California.) And, as these transformations have become more common, the technology that supports them has grown more elaborate. "A lot of suits used to be designed to add mass without taking into account mobility," said Tony Gardner, who designed Gwyneth Paltrow's suit for "Shallow Hal." The old suits were little more than pillows stitched together.

Such suits are still available: in "Primetime Glick," Martin Short wears a simple off-the-rack polyfibre-filled suit, with customized chest and rear. But in today's finest suits—for, say, "Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me" or "Big Momma's House"—every muscle group or area of fat is a separate construction; the pieces, made of different materials, are arranged in layers, and move against each other independently. According to Gardner, the "breakthrough" suit was worn by Eddie Murphy in "The Nutty Professor," in 1996. "When his character has that nightmare, and he's running through the city and he's in slow motion and you see his body weight shaking and jiggling, you totally buy that that is his physical body. To me, that was the most brilliant use of a fat suit, ever."

Paltrow's suit, a refinement of "Nutty Professor" technology, weighs less than twenty-five pounds and suggests a weight of about three hundred and fifty. ("It was horrible," Paltrow says cheerfully. "There was no ventilation whatsoever. I thought I was going to pass out.") The suit is a complex six-piece structure of latex, spandex, synthetic foam, plastic boning, and—giving weight to her foam breasts and to the foam flesh above her elbows—lentils. Gardner regards the suit as state of the art. "We took it as far as it could go," he said.

Dr. Berzins wears what she describes as "an overstuffed comforter, except in the shape of a body." Her suit is hot, hard to put on, and unconvincing at the neck (no matching prosthetic head), and, she says, "the breasts are too high. They start to rise up to my neck. They're just not right." She longs for a smart new replacement, but she discourages any suggestion that the fat suit is on its way to becoming an everyday accessory, a modern tool of personal reinvention—like a turtle tattoo, or an experiment in bisexuality. "I can't imagine why anybody would wear one for enjoyment," she says. "The only enjoyment is knowing you can take it off."

—*Ian Parker*



"That's the deal for Manhattan. If you have to ask how much for the Hamptons, you can't afford it."

• •

REFERENCE DEPT.
ENCYCLOPAEDIA ANDERSON

FIFTH AV
RIVERSID

The publicity material that accompanies "Life on a String," the latest album by the singer and performance artist Laurie Anderson, includes a set of anecdotes about the record's twelve songs. Of "One White Whale," Anderson writes, "I like fish stories that have questions in them." She compares "Dark Angel" to "a bucket of ice water." Amid such typically elliptical remarks, her description of how she came to write the song "Statue of Liberty" leaps out: "When I started working on the record I had just finished writing the entry about New York for the Encyclopædia Britannica."

The Encyclopædia Britannica, of course, is one of the most venerable reference works in the English language, published continuously since its first appearance in Edinburgh, in 1768. Generally, its editors have not made a practice of hiring singers or performance artists to write entries on major American cities. "Well, on most topics we would have scholars do the writing," Tom Panelas, a Britannica spokesman, said last week. "Laurie Anderson might be able to write about performance art. I can investigate the matter further, but I am fairly certain that we wouldn't commission an article about New York from her."

Panelas called back the next day. "Lo and behold," he said. "Laurie Anderson *is* writing an entry about New York for the Encyclopædia." Inspired by "The American Scene," a series of travel essays by Henry James, Theodore Pappas, the Britannica executive editor, decided to supplement the Encyclopædia's existing entries with a number of impressionistic writings about American cities and towns. Annie Proulx was asked to write about Rock Springs, Wyoming. Camille Paglia took on Syracuse. David Mamet got Chicago.

And New York fell to Laurie Anderson. "Yeah," Anderson said from her studio on Canal Street. "It struck me as strange, too, when they asked me to do this. I was intimidated at first. I have lived in New York most of my life and all of my life as an artist, and there are still many things I just don't know. I always meant to take one of those walking tours, but I never have, probably because I hate the megaphones. So this gave me a chance to do my own walking tour. I decided to focus on walking around at night, and I paid special attention to sounds. To me, the most typical sound of New York at night is that snare roll that happens when cabs roll over manhole covers. That didn't end up in the final piece, but it was a good starting point."

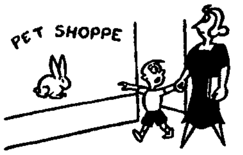
The current online Britannica entry about New York is heavy on geography ("city and port located at the mouth of the Hudson River, southeastern New York state") and geology ("sections of the granite bedrock of New York date to about 100 million years ago"). Anderson chose to focus on the city's character. "This has always been a place that has welcomed people who didn't fit in anywhere else," she said. "There was a guy in the early eighteenth century who was the colonial governor, Lord Cornbury. He was a cross-dresser—not just the wigs but the gowns and the décolleté. Even now in New York it would be strange. I guess Rudy does it for fun, but this guy was very serious. They asked him why, and he said, 'I represent Queen Anne, and I choose to represent her as faithfully as I can.' "

According to Panelas, Britannica's editors haven't decided whether the celebrity city guides will appear in the print or the online edition. (A new print edition is due out later this year.) Did

Anderson at least get a free Encyclopædia out of this? "I didn't ask," she said. "I should have. What a moron."

—*Ben Greenman*

PEEVED PETS
WHAT RABBITS WANT



Members of the House Rabbit Society have a lot in common with early Christians: they are a small, fervent band with a lot of uphill conversion work ahead of them. When Mary Cotter, who now heads the New York chapter, organized her first meeting of rabbit lovers in Westchester, in 1995, it consisted of fifteen people who gathered in her apartment. At this year's conference, which was held at the Ramada Inn in New Rochelle, there were about a hundred guests, including seven veterinarians from the New York area; a fourteen-pound rabbit named Zeke, who had been rescued from a butcher; and a two-pound special-needs rabbit named Little Guy.

The House Rabbit Society is a volunteer organization devoted to rescuing abandoned rabbits and teaching the public about rabbit care and behavior. Rabbit care extends into areas that might surprise non-rabbit people, such as massage therapy. (Because they are prey animals, most rabbits don't like to be held, or even looked at, for too long.) Monica Miller, a Manhattan practitioner of a technique called TTouch for Companion Animals, was a speaker at the New Rochelle conference. She demonstrated the technique on a fawn-colored rabbit named Anthony. "This works very well for rabbits with mobility issues," she said, looping a band of underwear elastic behind Anthony's shoulders.

"Do you go clockwise or counterclockwise when you're doing TTouch?" a man in the audience asked.

"That's an excellent question," Miller said. "Generally speaking, it's clockwise. But I *will* go counterclockwise on hot spots."

Anthony gazed calmly out at the crowd. He revealed no obvious mobility issues, though Miller was now massaging his face with a chopstick wrapped in an Ace bandage.

After lunch, Heidi Hoefer, a Long Island veterinarian, gave a slide presentation. Every picture of every rabbit elicited an "Awwwww" from the audience, except for the slides that were horrible. One of the latter showed a lop-eared rabbit with strange growths at the ends of his ears that turned out to be clumping kitty litter. ("Don't use kitty litter with rabbits," Hoefer said. Hay, apparently, is better.)

"Why does my rabbit knock over the litter box in his cage?" a woman asked.

"Because he can," Cotter answered sternly. Many H.R.S. members don't keep their rabbits in cages. "What if *you* lived in one small room with nothing but a toilet in it? Wouldn't you knock the toilet over?"

"I give my rabbit a shower if she gets dirty," a man volunteered happily.

Cotter glared at him. "She doesn't mind," the man said.

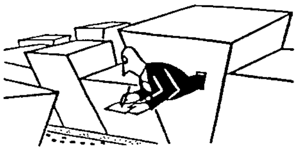
"You may think she doesn't mind," Cotter told him, "but I assure you she does."

"But I get down in the shower stall with her and hold her and tell her she's a good rabbit and—"

"Please don't give your rabbit showers," Cotter said firmly, and the man sat down.

—*Ann Hodgman*

POSTSCRIPT
MORDECAI RICHLER



Mordecai Richler, who died last week, had by the end of his life become inseparable from a place, Montreal, and even a country, Canada, without ever flattering or even saying anything particularly nice about either. One of the gifts of Canadian life is that it is not necessary to be loving in order to be loved. In America, a novelist who refuses to indulge a place's inflated sense of itself—a hard-boiled Chicagoan who has nothing hard-boiled to say about Chicago, etc.—usually just gets ignored. Even our best satirists end by genuflecting to our vast and mysterious greatness, à la Tom Wolfe. But though Richler never had a flattering word to say about his central subject, Montreal Jews, or about the estranging environment of Quebec nationalism in which they increasingly found themselves lost—when his deadpan account of Quebec's absurd language wars was published in this magazine, in 1991, it became a literary and political *schande* without precedent in his home town—he still became a local legend and then a kind of national landmark. A few years ago, on Opening Day, when the Expos' plump and gloomy mascot came fluttering down to the field in a parachute, one of the French-language commentators called out, "It's Richler!" There was genuine, warped affection in it.

He had, after all, done what few writers have ever done: taken a few streets—St. Lawrence, St. Urbain—and lodged them in the world's imagination. When he began to publish, in the mid-fifties, he was often grouped with the great generation of American Jewish writers, as a slightly lesser, northern version of Roth and Bellow and Malamud. But he really had nothing in common with those avid, world-devouring writers. If he belonged anywhere, it was to the train of acerbic English comic novelists whom he knew and admired during his long séjour in London. Evelyn Waugh was perhaps first among his idols, and Kingsley Amis's "Lucky Jim" a sort of model, and if he felt at home anywhere it was with those Angry Young and then Not-So-Angry (and not so young) men Amis, Alan Sillitoe, and John Braine. (Richler worked on a wonderful movie adaptation of Braine's "Room at the Top.") If he had a real peer, it was the young, supple, and still comic Naipaul, with whom he shared a perfect ear for the cringes of a colonized culture and an exasperated refusal to indulge its illusions—which, in its love of truth, is still a kind of love. Richler said that he dreamed of writing one permanent book, and though his most famous book remains "The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz," his best novel was probably his most ambitious, "Solomon Gursky Was Here," a slightly misunderstood attempt to write a skeptical national saga for Canada, in which Jewish bootlegging and Inuit mysticism were placed side by side. He found many ways in fiction to write of his love for his wife, Florence, and the fact that their five children have all gone on to many kinds of cosmopolitan success—including writing novels of their own—must, in the end, have been authentic solace to a writer whose whole life was a campaign against false provincial sentiment.

—*Adam Gopnik*

THE FINANCIAL PAGE
LITTLE PROFIT IN BIG CHINA

In 1937, Harper & Brothers published "Four Hundred Million Customers," by Carl Crow, the founder of the first American advertising agency in China. In style and tone, the book is a pure period piece, part patronizing sketch of the inscrutable Orient and part prewar marketing tract. (Did you know that Chinese dogs always bark at foreigners, that Chinese consumers are unremittingly faithful to their favorite brands, and that Chinese women have the world's most beautiful legs?) But in spirit the book could have been written at any time in the last seven hundred years. Fourteenth-century Genoese merchants, sixteenth-century Portuguese navigators, nineteenth-century opium pushers, and twenty-first-century C.E.O.s all have fallen for the same idea that enthralled Crow: China is potentially the world's biggest market, so there must be a way to make lots of money there.

In the eighteen-fifties, that dream had English textile-makers calculating how rich they'd be if every man in China lengthened his shirttail by a single inch. By the end of the century, American businessmen were eying China, too: John D. Rockefeller wanted his kerosene in every lamp. So, although the current China craze may date back to the late seventies, when Deng Xiaoping opened the door to capitalism and American companies dashed in, it's the same old Shanghai rag—except that now there are nearly 1.3 billion potential customers. American businesses remain obsessed with the idea of selling them stuff, and have still not figured out how. China remains our Seven Cities of Cibola, promising untold riches yet shimmering just out of reach.

For the China dreamers, the market is always on the verge of exploding. In 1992, for instance, the World Bank predicted that by 2004 China's G.N.P. would be larger than that of the United States. Not likely. (China's economy is still just one-seventh the size of ours.) Then, there's that new ad for the consulting firm Accenture, which claims that by the year 2007 Chinese will be the No. 1 language on the Web. (If you believe that, I'd be happy to sell you some lovely Three Gorges land.) The latest source of optimism is China's entry into the World Trade Organization, which could happen later this summer. This time, the boosters claim, it will be different. Tariffs and barriers will fall, and those billion customers will finally be ripe for the plucking. And, as designers, brewers, automakers, and theme-park operators have said, "If just one per cent of the Chinese buy our product, we'll be rich."

The real Chinese market is much smaller, and harder to crack. Of that vaunted 1.3 billion, nine hundred million are rural peasants. Another hundred million or so are unemployed rural workers who have moved to the cities in search of jobs. That leaves a population about the size of the United States, including a growing middle class, with a much smaller average income. One per cent of that is pretty good, but it's no El Dorado. And though Mao's Four Musts (bicycle, radio, watch, sewing machine) were replaced by Deng's Eight Bigs (color TV, electric fan, refrigerator, stereo, camera, motorcycle, suite of furniture, and washing machine), the Chinese are not consumers in the American vein. They save about forty per cent of their income; Americans save just five per cent.

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

China's economy has quintupled in the past two decades, but that has not translated into huge corporate profits for the West. Some companies—notably, Coke and Motorola—have cracked the Chinese market, but most have been flummoxed by it. A 1999 study by the consulting firm A. T. Kearney found that only forty per cent of multinational corporations doing business in China had turned a profit there. And even the profitable ones have rates of return (an average of merely five per cent, according to some estimates) lower than what they'd get anywhere else in Asia. There are just too many impediments: a massive bureaucracy, widespread corruption, the government's mercantilist bent, the country's sheer sprawl, its Iron Rooster infrastructure. But the most often overlooked impediment is the fact that the Chinese have companies, too. And not all of them are state-supported pikers. Westerners imagined that once China was open they'd have free rein, with little domestic competition. But China is not a commercial void. Chinese businessmen are just as interested as American businessmen in selling to the Chinese. And they're better positioned.

Why bother, then? The argument goes that the market is so big you can't afford not to be there, no matter how much it costs. Someday, millions of Chinese are going to want a Michelob, and when they do Anheuser-Busch will be ready. But something more than economics is at work here. After all, India has a billion people, who are better educated and more likely to speak English than the Chinese, yet somehow it's always China that we look to. What keeps the West coming is the idea of China as the world's most enduring commercial frontier. A century ago, American businessmen looked to China after the American West had been divvied up, because they feared there were no markets left for them to exploit. Today, when companies are asked how they can possibly keep growing at the rapid rate the stock market demands, they say, "China!" In a way, China is like the Internet: a real thing turned chimera, by way of hyperbole. It is huge, and getting huger, yet even forty years from now it will be, as its own government says, "a middle-developed country." Think Italy, with barking dogs.

—*James Surowiecki*

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

DREAMING ABOUT WAR

Someone in the Pentagon is staging a defense revolution—and it's not the generals.

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

In September of 1999, George W. Bush, then just trying out his act as a Presidential candidate, gave his first major speech on defense. If you didn't know anything about the subject, the speech, delivered at the Citadel, the military college in Charleston, South Carolina, would have sounded like an unremarkable Republican artillery fusillade: the Democrats were starving and dishonoring the military, peace can be achieved only through strength, and so on. If, however, you owned a secret decoder ring, the speech was highly significant: Bush had endorsed the Revolution in Military Affairs—or, as it's inevitably called in the acronym-happy defense world, the R.M.A.

The R.M.A. idea was first set forth by Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov, then the chief of the Soviet General Staff, in a 1982 pamphlet entitled "Vsegda v Gotovnosti k Zashchite Otechestva" ("Always Ready to Defend the Fatherland"), in which he pointed out that recent American advances in missile technology had the potential to change the nature of warfare. During the Cold War, a standard part of the cultural equipment of Republican defense experts was the idea that strategic genius resided within the Soviet military; otherwise life would be as pallid as a James Bond movie in which the villain doesn't have a fiendishly clever diabolical scheme. Ogarkov quickly became required reading in American defense circles. The most important promoter of the R.M.A. in America has been Andrew W. Marshall, the head of the Pentagon's obscure Office of Net Assessment, a cult figure in his own right, and one of the most curious and interesting figures in the defense world. People with decoder rings knew that Bush's speech at the Citadel had been drafted by Marshall's corps of allies and that it endorsed Marshall's main ideas.

Bush promised that, as President, he would order up "an immediate, comprehensive review of our military" and give the Secretary of Defense "a broad mandate to challenge the status quo." Sure enough, this February, only a couple of weeks into the Bush Administration, newspaper stories reported that the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, would be conducting a broad review of the military—or, rather, that Andrew Marshall would be conducting it on his behalf. During the Clinton Administration, William Cohen, as the Secretary of Defense, tried, without success, to exile the Office of Net Assessment and Marshall, who is seventy-nine, to the National Defense University. Now, in 2001, it looked as if Andy Marshall was back—emphatically so, in a position of higher influence than at any other point in his long career.

Marshall is the last active member in government of a cadre of strategic thinkers that took form more than fifty years ago at the original think tank, the RAND Corporation, in Santa Monica, California. The best-known member of the group, and still a hero to conservatives, was Albert Wohlstetter; other members were Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers; Herman Kahn, a model for Dr. Strangelove; and James Schlesinger, later the Secretary of Defense and the man who, in 1973, created the Office of Net Assessment and installed Marshall as its head. All these people were involved in what Kahn liked to call "thinking the unthinkable"; that is, working through precise scenarios, based on game theory and statistics, for what would happen in the event of a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. There was particular emphasis on how the United States might survive a first strike and still be able to launch a second strike.

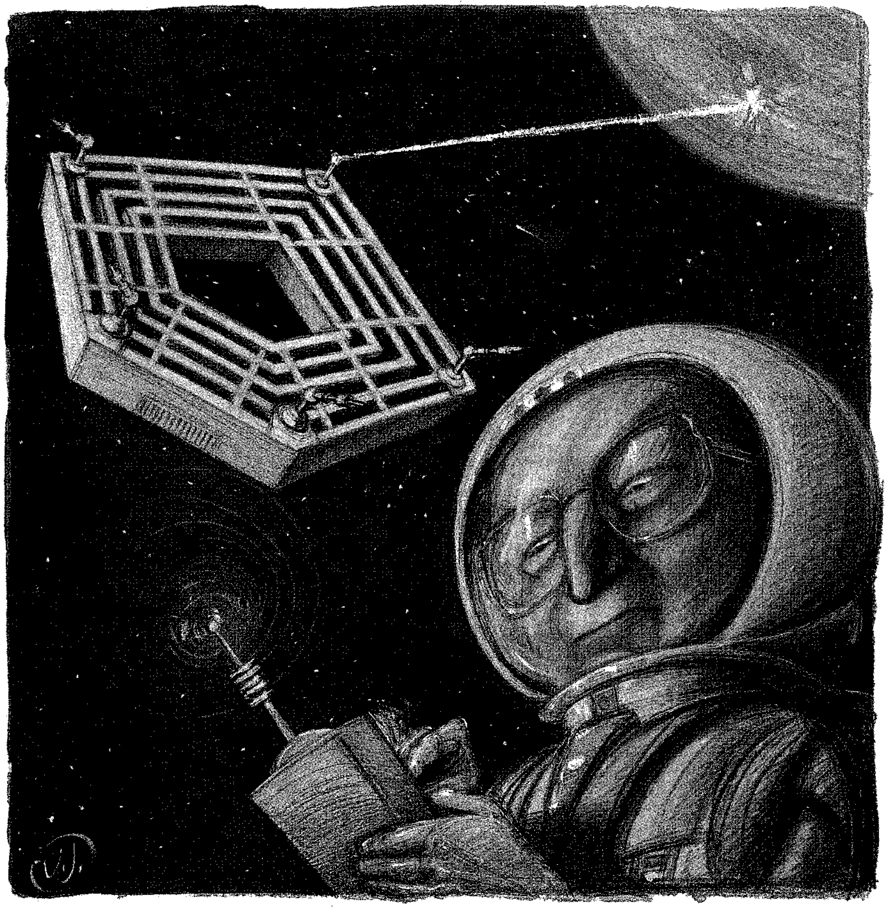
In his early years at the Pentagon, Marshall concerned himself with other matters. In the eighties, he performed studies concluding that the Soviet Union had become much weaker than most people imagined it to be. For the past decade and a half, every July at the Naval War College, in Newport, Rhode Island, he has conducted his celebrated "summer studies," in which invited experts spend a week pondering a question posed by him.

Marshall, a small, bald man with wire-rimmed spectacles who dresses in the manner of an unreconstructed nineteen-fifties organization man, has a peculiarly strong mystique. For a defense intellectual, he hasn't published much, and in public settings he doesn't say much, either, often mumbling in a low voice, or questioning but not answering, or simply saying he has nothing to add to the discussion. The medium through which he works is his protégés, who are extremely loyal. These days, the people he knows in high places include Rumsfeld; the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz; the Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage (a principal author of Bush's speech at the Citadel); and the Secretary of the Air Force, James Roche, who worked for Marshall in the seventies.

The Revolution in Military Affairs, Marshall's main cause for the past ten years, can be seen as a return to his RAND roots. There is a substantial R.M.A. literature, and one should be cautious about attributing all its main points to Marshall, but most of it posits a version of conventional war that would be waged in much the same way as nuclear war, with strategists at remote computer screens targeting precision missile strikes. The R.M.A. has been up and running—in seminar rooms, at least—for long enough now that it has a language all its own (such as "deep-strike architecture," "systems of systems," "info dominance," and "asymmetric competitors"), which, like all insider jargon, has the effect of pushing non-members away.

The idea of it, though, isn't complicated. R.M.A. belongs to the family of ideas that sees progress occurring in dramatic bursts rather than gradually; and the dramatic bursts in military progress now before us follow from the development of the microprocessor and the fall of the Soviet Union. Advances in information technology have made possible a host of new military equipment, from long-range smart missiles to drone airplanes to spy satellites to computer viruses that can take out an enemy's communications system. All these high-tech military systems, in the R.M.A. vision, could be networked together and deployed in a coördinated fashion by a central command. It was coördination of this kind, rather than the presence of a single new piece of equipment, that explains the success of the German Panzer division, a favorite historical example of the R.M.A. New technology makes it possible to hope for the great reduction, or even the elimination, of Carl von Clausewitz's "fog of war," the enveloping confusion of the battlefield. Maybe there would be no battlefield, no "closing with the enemy"—just people at terminals launching missiles.

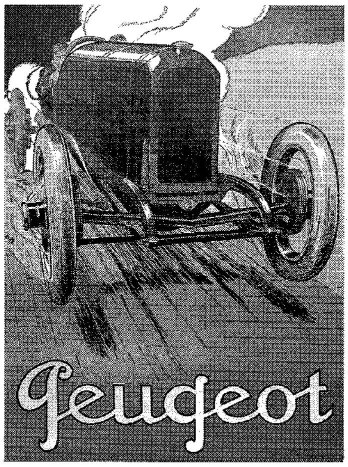
VICTOR JUHASZ



Andrew Marshall, chief promoter of the Revolution in Military Affairs, is a cult figure.

To the R.M.A. crowd, the end of the Cold War means that the main threat to the United States in the next few decades will come from smaller nations that have acquired the new missiles and computers, not to mention chemical and biological weapons. (Marshall and his followers also believe that the next world power will be China, but not for a while; one of Marshall's summer studies involved war games set in the future against "a large Asian country.") Rather than attacking traditional military targets, these "street-fighter states" could aim at American water supplies, or oil wells, or forests. In response, instead of our stationing large conventional forces abroad, R.M.A. strategists want us to be able to respond instantaneously to enemies who might be attacking from any direction, with no warning. The R.M.A. isn't overtly ideological, but it makes for a good fit with a foreign policy that is suspicious of international alliances and prefers to see the United States act mainly alone and mainly to protect itself. (It makes for a good fit, too, with the Administration's other leading military cause, missile defense.) The R.M.A. is supposed to be an appropriate defense policy for a time of public intolerance for drawn-out conflicts, since engagements would theoretically play themselves out rapidly.

But a summary of the main ideas of the R.M.A. leaves out something important: how maximally threatening it is to the bureaucratic interests of the three departments of the American military—the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force.



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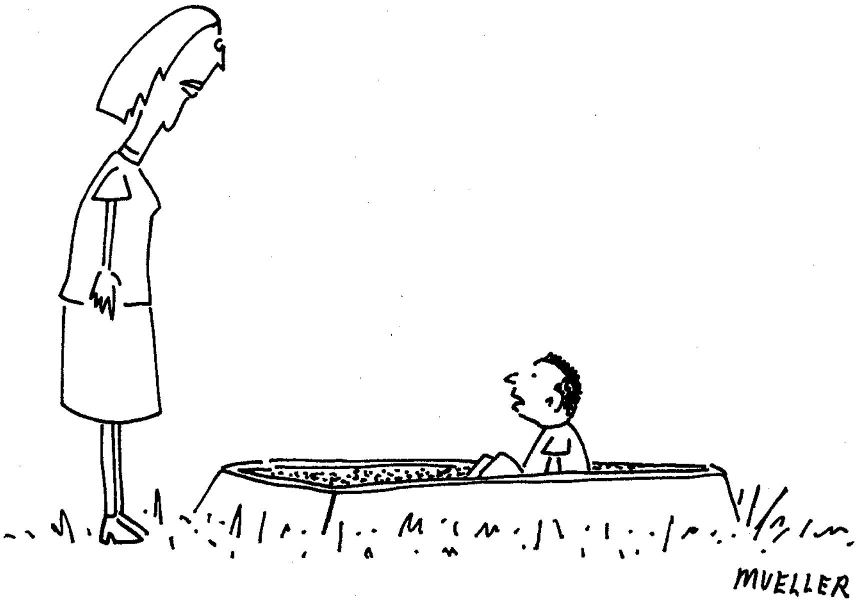


“It’s full of sand.”

• •

Each service organizes itself according to big “platforms,” expensive pieces of equipment on which weapons are mounted. The Navy is divided into carrier battle groups, the Army partially into armored divisions, and the Air Force partially into tactical fighter wings. The most prestigious slots in each service are those offering command of the big platforms, especially in direct combat. The defense-contracting industry is also oriented around building the big platforms, and so is the relationship between the Pentagon and Congress, since contractors try to spread production of the platforms across as many congressional districts as possible. In addition to the three services, there are regional commands, oriented around large permanent overseas military bases that the United States has maintained for decades. Over all, the United States’ defense posture is based on the idea that we should be equipped to fight two “major theatre wars” simultaneously.

The R.M.A.’s supporters are skeptical about every single item on that list. They want to do away with the two-major-theatre-wars defense posture because they believe it locks the armed forces into their present form, and there probably won’t be major theatre wars on the Persian Gulf model in the future anyway. They don’t like overseas bases and other “forward deployments,” because the troops are too vulnerable to attack from enemy missiles. (The Gulf War, in R.M.A. circles, was not the harbinger of the military future, because it involved an elaborate forward deployment, Operation Desert Shield, that took six months to complete.) The R.M.A. would greatly de-emphasize the big platforms, because they’re vulnerable, too, and because advances in long-range-missile technology make them unnecessary. R.M.A. thinkers don’t like the defense-contracting process, because it locks us into particular weapons systems for decades at a time. In fact, most of them are suspicious of the basic division of the armed forces into three services (because the services resist the coördination that is at the heart of the R.M.A.). One study produced by Marshall’s Office of Net Assessment in 1993 says, “Our initial research indicates that the most difficult part of the transition will come in the area of organizational innovation. Large-scale organizations—especially military organizations—are often highly resistant to change.”

In Bush’s speech at the Citadel, he seemed to endorse directly a surprisingly large number of the R.M.A. ideas that are the least popular with the military. He said, “Our military is still organized more for Cold War threats than for the challenges of a new century.” He said we’ll never be able to mount another Gulf War, because we probably won’t have time. He called for such concepts as long-range and unmanned aircraft, "arsenal ships" (as opposed to carriers), which would be "packed with long-range missiles to destroy targets from great distances," and, on land, "smaller, more agile formations, rather than cumbersome divisions."

One of Marshall's protégés told me that they sometimes get called the Jedi Knights. This spring, it began to look as though their next adventure would be the bureaucratic version of "The Empire Strikes Back." A few stories from the Washington *Post's* well-wired Pentagon reporter, Thomas E. Ricks, suggest how things have been progressing since February, when Ricks reported that Andrew Marshall would be running the defense review. In March, he reported that Rumsfeld and Marshall together had briefed the top military brass on their ideas. Then, with the coming of spring, the tone began to change: the "secretive" review had acquired critics, in Congress and the Pentagon, who were likening it to Hillary Clinton's task force on health-care reform in 1993—a kiss-of-death comparison. Finally, on May 25th, Ricks published an account of an unpleasant-sounding meeting between Rumsfeld and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the super-secure room in the Pentagon known as the Tank, at which they quarrelled directly over the review.

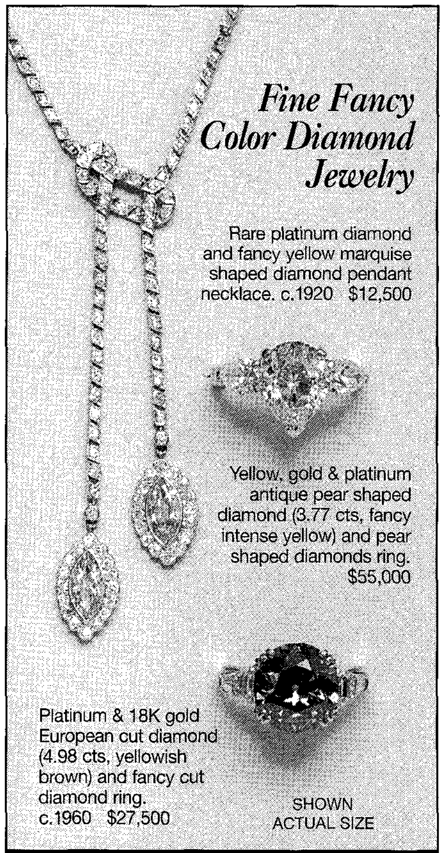
To get a better feeling for the career military's reservations about the R.M.A., I went to see William Crowe, the blunt retired admiral who was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the George H.W. Bush Administration and who still moves in military circles. He said that, except during a major war, there simply can't, and shouldn't, be sudden revolutions in the armed forces, which are enormous organizations that put a premium on loyalty, stability, and tradition. "Rumsfeld's going to run into that right now," Crowe told me. "If he thinks he's going to change the culture of the military overnight, he ain't seen nothing and he ain't been nowhere."

I asked Crowe about Andrew Marshall. "Bright as hell," he said. "Very soft-spoken and gentle. He suffers from one big problem—he has never seen a shot fired in anger." (Many, maybe even most, of the leading defense intellectuals have never served in the military, and that is a persistent source of tension between them and the services.) Crowe teaches at the United States Naval Academy, in Annapolis, Maryland, and once a year he takes his class on a field trip to the Pentagon. On the last visit, he said, he ran into Marshall walking down the corridor and introduced him to his students. "One of my midshipmen, who's going into Naval Air, said to him, 'Why are you doing away with our carriers?' Andy said, 'My study didn't even mention carriers! I don't know what the newspapers are talking about!' " Crowe told me, ever so slightly rolling his eyes.

Crowe went on to make his case against the R.M.A. "First, the idea of precision guided weapons—you're really talking about money," he said. "In the Gulf War, we almost ran through our entire stock of precision weapons. We took out targets that cost less than the weapon. Tomahawks are about a million bucks apiece. If you run out, you need something else. Most of the targets we destroyed in the Gulf War were destroyed by iron bombs. Also, in a really tough war you can't avoid head-on confrontation entirely. You just can't. My God, if you think you can support arms on the ground with air coming in from three thousand miles away—that's sheer nonsense. And, if it's protracted, you run out of sophisticated stuff. So numbers become important and amount of equipment becomes important."

What next? I asked. "There's going to be a storm," Crowe said. "Somebody once told me that if you want to change things you say, 'It's perfect,' and then you start changing. By the time they discover what you're doing, it's too late. If you announce it ahead of time, all the forces muster, and you'd be amazed by how effective they can be. They all have congressional lobbies. See, they're too late. They've already made the mistake. The perception has gotten out of control."

On May 25th, President Bush gave the commencement address at the Naval Academy. Naturally, his speech was subjected in the military world to a Talmudic level of parsing. He undoubtedly endorsed the R.M.A. in general terms—"I'm committed to building a future force that is defined less by size and more by mobility and swiftness, one that is easier to deploy and sustain, one that relies more heavily on stealth, precision weaponry, and information technolo-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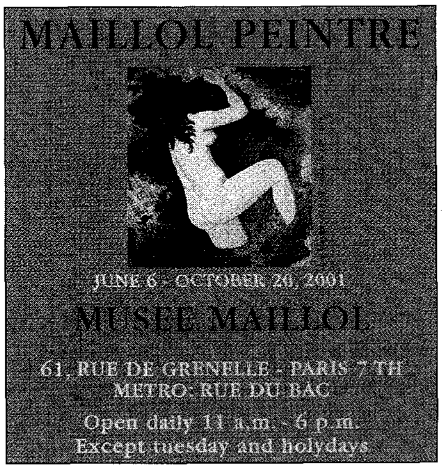
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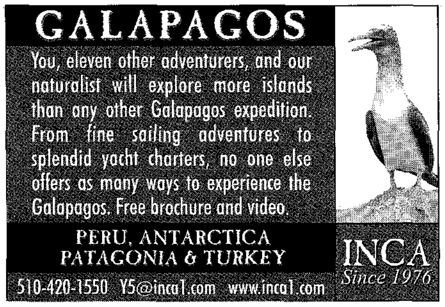

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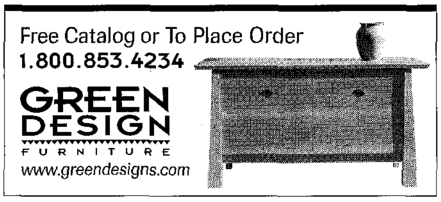

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Without turning on the lights,
Or they stand leaning
On gloomy furniture
Listening to their hearts beat.

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Is black like a blackboard.
Every old man is alone
In this classroom, squinting
At that fine chalk line
That divides being-here
From being-here-no-more.

No matter. It was a glass of water
They were going to get,
But not just yet.
They listen for mice in the walls,
A car passing on the street,
Their dead fathers shuffling past them
On their way to the kitchen.

—*Charles Simic*

gies," he said—but the level of specificity was far less than in the Citadel speech. There was a laudatory mention of an aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Constellation. Artful nonspecificity and reassurance seemed to be the new weapons in the Administration's rhetorical arsenal.

That same week, the Pentagon's public-affairs office let me know that a request I'd made some time earlier to do interviews about the defense review had been granted. When I arrived at the Pentagon, the lieutenant colonel from public affairs who met me said I'd have to refer to the person I was interviewing as "a senior defense official." This is standard practice in the Pentagon, and the "senior defense official" you often see quoted in the papers isn't always the same person—he's a member of a category that includes perhaps two dozen high-level figures. In this case, though, "senior defense official" doesn't quite work, because when I was taken up to a grand office on the E-Ring of the Pentagon, two senior defense officials were waiting for me. To meld them, for the purposes of quotation, into a single made-up person would be actively misleading, so instead I'm going to call them the Senior Official and the Defense Intellectual.

I started off by asking them how the defense review was going and when it would be finished. "I think the best way to describe it," the Senior Official said, "is that Mr. Rumsfeld came in. He had a lot of questions. He's been very open in saying that he didn't come in with some sort of chip that was preprogrammed with answers. He wanted to catch up. New Secretary, new Administration. So he asked one retired admiral to take a look at the quality of life of troops—to take a deep look at that. He asked another person to take a look at macro notions of how the department acquires its equipment. He asked others to look at what would be, quote, transformational ideas. Another group to take a look at what would be the long-term best employment of conventional forces. When all was said and done, I think there were, like, twenty of these things. One part of it was 'O.K., the world's changed, lots of things are different, what might be a way of thinking about the long-

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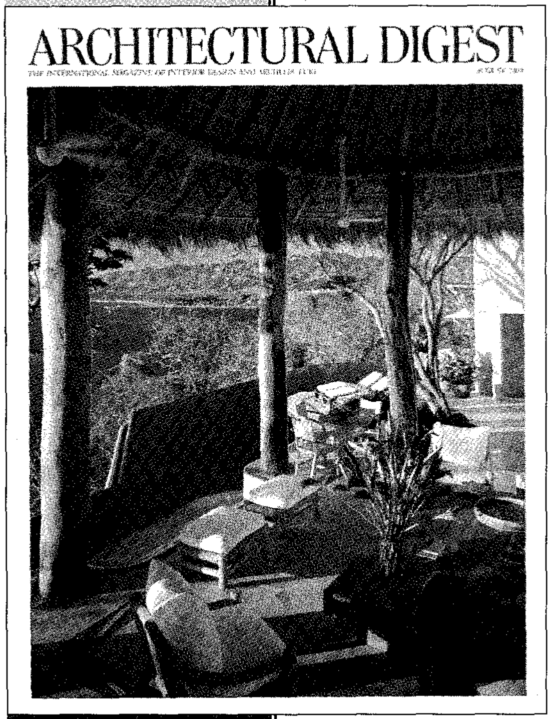

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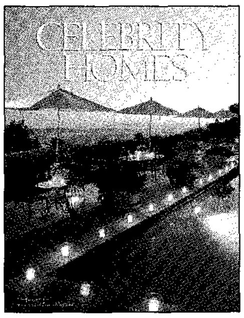

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ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

range future?' So that was asked of Andy."

The Senior Official was telling me that there was no massive, top-to-bottom defense review of the kind President Bush, in his speech at the Citadel, had said he'd order his Secretary of Defense to conduct. Instead, there was merely this very minor, informal effort; and Andrew Marshall, rather than being in charge of it, was just doing one innocent study. What was all the fuss about? Rumsfeld would look at the studies when they were done, and then perhaps some of the results might be reflected in the 2003 defense budget, which wouldn't be unveiled until January. Perhaps "revolution" begins to look less appealing once you're in power.

I turned to the Defense Intellectual and asked if he'd give me an example from military history of a new technology dramatically changing the way war was conducted. He thought for a minute and gave two from the Second World War: the Germans' development of the Panzer division and, later, the American breakthrough in carrier-based naval aviation in the Pacific. "What comes out, so interestingly, in both of these cases," he said, in a soft, scratchy voice, "is that the new kinds of forces, in both cases, represent a small portion of the total force. I mean, we go into the war with about a seven-hundred-ship Navy, of which eight are carriers. In the German case, they go into the war with about a hundred and sixty-five divisions, of which four are Panzer divisions. I mean, that's Poland. By the time they go into France, the number of Panzer divisions is seven or eight."

We talked for a while about military breakthroughs. The Defense Intellectual was obviously a man who had spent a lot of time studying military history and who enjoyed ruminating about it. I asked him whether there wasn't always intense bureaucratic opposition to military innovation. He sat slumped on a couch, his big hands fidgeting absently with the laminated security badge on a chain around his neck. He spoke in a casual, offhand way. "Yes," he said. He recommended that I look up a book on the subject by Stephen Rosen, who is another of Andrew Marshall's protégés, and is now teaching at Harvard. "He gives, I think, the best analysis of the internal politics or sociology of military organizations and what it takes to have a major change. There is reluctance. It's one of the reasons, I think, why you find that these big changes many times happen through this process—that is, where only a small part of the force is really changed. And it's changed because, within the officer corps, there is a subgroup that thinks that the available technology can be used in some novel way, and it's either supported enough by the top people or somehow or another gets allowed to be tried. And then comes the war, and real combat that shows that, by God, these guys were right—that this is the thing that really works."

Conversationally, the Defense Intellectual was a slow starter, unlike the more direct and hearty Senior Official, but once he got going his voice became louder and clearer. He went on, "So they got certain general descriptions right, and that helped frame things, and they were able to do things. But, in almost all of these really successful cases, a small part of the force was transformed, and then the actual combat decides how good an idea that is."

I was getting the point. The forces of the Revolution in Military Affairs would not be making a frontal assault on the military bureaucracies and their beloved platforms, right?

"At least, my view," said the Senior Official, "and I think Andy's view, is: no, you too easily can make a huge mistake when you throw away something that's good. Arleigh Burke"—one of the great naval commanders of the Second World War and, later, Chief of Naval Operations—"once said to me—I asked him, 'When is it time to move past the aircraft carrier?' He said, 'When it fails in war.' You don't throw out something that's worked. But you can be adapting parts of the force in interesting ways."

The Defense Intellectual broke in. "Taking out insurance against threats to the things that you have and the way you're doing business now that may crop up."

What I had just heard reminded me of the old "counterforce studies" that Andrew Marshall used to conduct at RAND. The decade of stentorian articles and lectures leading up to Bush's Citadel speech could be thought of as the R.M.A.'s retaliatory strike. This spring, the Pentagon had evidently launched its own first strike. Now the R.M.A. forces were obviously preparing their second strike, which, appropriately enough, would employ stealth technology. ♦

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SHOUTS & MURMURS

THE VOICES IN MY HEAD

BY JACK HANDEY

I never know when the voices in my head are going to start talking to me. I might be coming out of my apartment and I'll look up at the clouds. Suddenly, the voices in my head will tell me to go back inside and get an umbrella, because it might rain. Sometimes I'll obey the voices and go get the umbrella. But sometimes I muster my strength and refuse to get the umbrella. Still, the voices don't let you forget that you disobeyed them, especially if it rains. They'll say, "I knew you should have gotten the umbrella. Why didn't you?"

I don't expect you to understand what it's like to have voices in your head telling you what to do. But it is a nightmare I live with all the time. Right now, for instance, the voices are telling me to go back and change the word "nightmare" to "living hell."

The voices torment me from the time I wake up. They'll say, "Get up and go to the bathroom to urinate." Throughout the day, they never let up: "Go get something to eat," "Go take a nap," "Go to the bathroom again," "Get ready for bed." On and on. Sometimes the voices even talk to me in my sleep, telling me to get up and urinate. My fear is that the voices will tell me to do something crazy, like go look for a job.

I used to think that drinking alcohol would calm the voices, but it usually makes them worse. They'll say things like "Go tell that person what you really think of him" or "Get up on that table and do your funny cowboy dance."

The voices used to talk to me about the Beatles. When I was young, they'd tell me to go buy a certain Beatles album. "But I don't have any money," I'd say. Then the voices would suggest I mow some lawns to earn some money. "But that's a lot of work," I'd say. "Well," the voices would say, "do you want the album or not?" (Wait. That might have been my father.)

Sometimes I go for relatively long periods without the voices talking to me, such as when I'm watching TV, or watching ants, or lying on the floor and trying to blow lint balls into one big herd of lint. Or seeing which one of my cats is most afraid of "pillowcase head." But these golden moments are fleeting, and soon the voices return.

I just wish the voices would tell me something useful once in a while, like how to say things in French, or where my gloves went. But they hardly ever do. In fact, many times the voices like to taunt me, telling me, for instance, to turn left at an intersection when, it turns out later, I clearly should have turned right. Or telling me to wear a tie that obviously looks ridiculous.

Even worse, sometimes the voices themselves don't know what they want. They'll tell me to go up and talk to a pretty woman, then they'll say, "No, wait, she's too pretty for you," then they'll say, "Oh, go ahead," then they'll say, "What if your wife finds out?" (Man, make up your mind!)

When you tell people you have voices in your head, they think you're crazy. But when you don't say anything at all, and you just sit there and stare at them, they also think you're crazy. So you can't win.

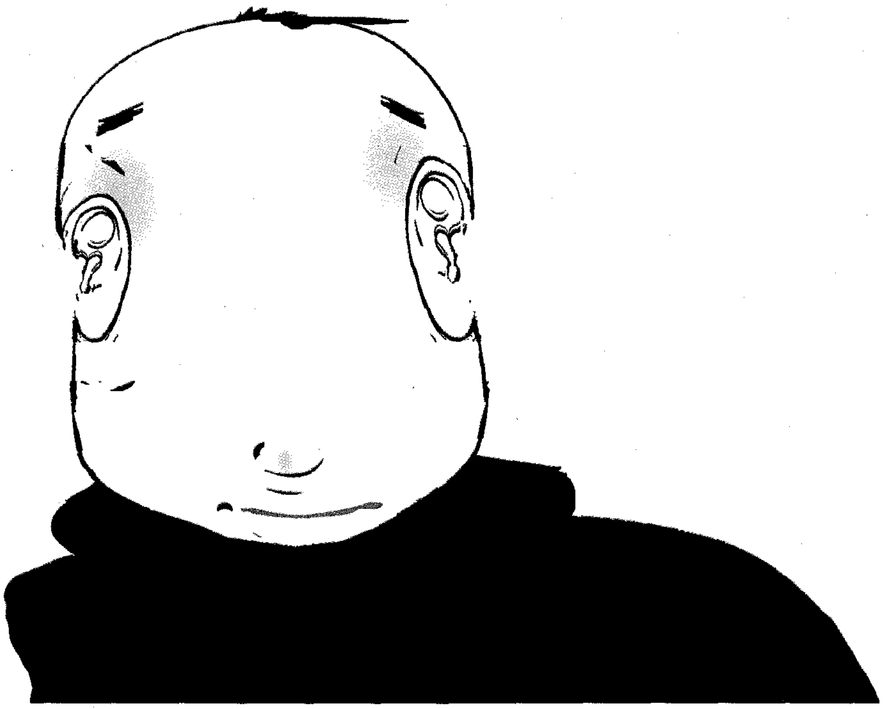
I thought about going to a psychiatrist to get rid of the voices, but the voices said it would be expensive, and would probably take a long time, and that I'd have to put my pants on and go to the subway, then come all the way back on the subway, then take my pants off, and who knows if it would even work? Sometimes the voices have a point.

One day, I decided that I couldn't take it anymore, and I decided to silence the voices in my head once and for all. But I couldn't figure out how to do that, so I never did.

Maybe the answer is not to try to get rid of the voices but to learn to live with them. (I don't really think that; I'm just saying it for the voices.)

Will I ever be able to fully control the voices in my head? Probably not. But will I at least be able to adjust my life style so that the voices are not a threat to me or others? Again, the answer is no.

But I'm not ready to throw in the towel just yet, because one thing I have learned is this: the voices may be bossy, but they're really stupid. ♦



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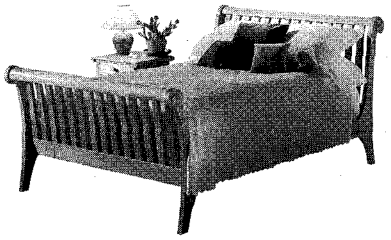

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U.S. JOURNAL

THE RADON CURE

Why would people travel hundreds of miles to be exposed to radiation?

BY MARK SINGER

BOULDER, MONTANA

For Patricia Lewis's sake, and also for professional reasons, I wish I'd felt worse last month when I travelled to Boulder, Montana, where I intended to spend a few days inhaling radon gas in the company of people who believe that doing so cures what ails you. During the winter, my right knee began acting as if I'd overextended a ligament, and I also had some lower-back pain, probably from slouching in my desk chair. By the time I showed up in Boulder, an unprepossessing town with a population of two thousand, in the west-central part of the state, midway between Helena and Butte, these symptoms had inopportunely vanished. In their absence, it would have been convenient if I'd brought along a crippled dog—but, well, I hadn't. Nevertheless, I didn't experience a diminished sense of purpose or a feeling of not fitting in, mainly because Boulder, an old mining settlement, impressed me as a place where hopefulness tends to prevail over careful planning or exactitude. Pat Lewis and her husband, Burdette Anderson, seemed a prime example. Seven years ago, they packed up their lives in Seattle—at the time, she was doing office work for a shipping company and he was repairing hydraulic pumps on heavy machinery—and moved to Boulder, even though, she told me, "we didn't have a clue what we were getting into." She said this during our first conversation, in a tone that sounded both cheerful and mildly bewildered, as if, having somehow boarded the wrong train, she'd decided to ride it wherever it was heading.

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Pat Lewis, a mine operator, says she wants to "convince people that this is somethi

What brought Lewis and Anderson to Montana was an erstwhile uranium mine on a gentle granite slope overlooking Boulder, which is situated in a typically Montana-sublime mile-high valley in the Elkhorn Mountains. In 1949, the mine produced its first commercial quantities of uranium ore from one of three claims staked by the Elkhorn Mining Company, whose president and principal owner was a geologist and mining engineer named Wade V. Lewis, Pat's grandfather. Two years later (and two years before she was born), he made an inadvertent and peculiar discovery. According to legend—a legend Wade himself promulgated in "Arthritis and Radioactivity," a book that he published in 1955—one day he was giving a tour of the mine to a woman from California who mentioned that she suffered from bursitis, and Wade "facetiously" replied that the radiation inside the mine might alleviate her symptoms. Sure enough, the very next day she was pain-free. Subsequently, another California woman with bursitis, an acquaintance of the first, came to the mine and she, too, got relief. "Thereafter," Lewis wrote, "the stampede started."

RODEO
AUG. 27-30
by C.J. Connie Smith

orth trying as a first step rather than as a last resort." Photograph by Sylvia Plachy.*

During the next few months, hundreds of people, most of them encumbered by arthritis or other rheumatological complaints, some in wheelchairs and some carried on litters, made the journey to what became known as the Free Enterprise Radon Health Mine. So, inevitably, did reporters. A photographer and a correspondent from *Life* came around in June, 1952, and by then the Merry Widow mine, in the nearby town of Basin, had also begun welcoming the afflicted. The story in *Life* alerted potential customers as well as potential entrepreneurs, and eventually there were sixteen radon-therapy mines operating within a thirty-mile radius.

In a revised edition of "Arthritis and Radioactivity," published nine years after the first, Lewis set forth his theory of radon's medicinal application. When inhaled for a prescribed amount of time in the sort of optimal conditions that just happened to exist at the Free Enterprise mine, radon—which is a by-product of the decay of radium—stimulated the endocrine system to increase the body's natural secretions of hydrocortisone, and this reduced inflammation of the joints. Radon therapy, he maintained, also ameliorated sinusitis, asthma, and eczema. Lewis wasn't a medical doctor or a nuclear physicist, of course, nor did he have tangible medical evidence to corroborate his hypothesis. But he had lots of anecdotal evidence in the form of written testimonials from happy visitors who described how they'd given up their wheelchairs or canes or crutches or pain medications. Not everyone who came to the mine benefitted, but the majority apparently did. Lewis couldn't prove that radon therapy worked. On the other hand, anyone who insisted that it didn't work was in the logically awkward position of trying to prove a negative.

Radon is ubiquitous in nature, constantly emanating from the earth's crust and filtering into the atmosphere. It has a half-life of not quite four days, and as it breaks down, or ionizes, it emits electrically charged alpha and beta particles and gamma rays. Epidemiological studies conducted on miners have shown a correlation between prolonged exposure to radon gas—specifically to the heavy alpha particles—and lung cancer. There's less than absolute scientific consensus about radon's effect on humans who don't spend their working lives underground. The majority viewpoint goes: if exposure to a lot of ionizing radiation from radon is bad for you, so, too, is exposure to a little. This school of thought has predominated since the mid-eighties, when the Environmental Protection Agency launched an aggressive and often hyperbolic public-relations campaign to warn of the dangers of radon in the home. The public-health consequences of the E.P.A.'s efforts across the years are debatable, but one clear economic consequence has been the creation of the estimated hundred-million-dollar-a-year radon-abatement industry. These are the friendly contractors who charge homeowners disconcerting sums to ventilate their basements.

Because there's no countervailing economic incentive to promote the salutary effects of low-level ionizing radiation, there's no such thing as an organized pro-radon lobby. One natural constituency would be the owners of Montana's five remaining radon mines and their patrons—a declining population, it turns out. Pat Lewis had warned me that I would be visiting the Free Enterprise during a slow week, and, indeed, as I dropped in and out over a four-day period I encountered only eleven customers and two superannuated dogs. Then I made the rounds of the other mines—Merry Widow, Sunshine, Lone Tree, and Earth Angel—and discovered that, with the exception of the Merry Widow, where the amenities include a campground along the Boulder River, most weeks are slow weeks everywhere.

The unresolved mythology that surrounds radon—terribly bad for you? not really so bad? spooky but beneficial?—probably explains why the Montana state government has shown little inclination to regulate the radon mines or, for that matter, to promote them as a tourist attraction. There's considerable variation in radon levels from one mine to another. One chart I came across showed that the level at the Merry Widow was eighty-five per cent higher than at the Free Enterprise and almost six hundred per cent higher than at the Sunshine. Nevertheless, more than a decade ago the mine owners agreed to adhere to a standard that limits visitors to thirty-two hours of exposure during a calendar year. In practice, however, anyone who wanted to spend thirty-two hours a year in each of the mines could easily do so undetected. Whether it would make any difference, positive or negative, is another question.

Of all the testimonials that get recited inside radon mines, I'm partial to the canine variety. I heard my first iteration at the Free Enterprise, courtesy of Patrick McGowan, a retired ironworker who, unlike most radon seekers, lives in Boulder and spreads his annual thirty-two hours over several weeks. I met him as he emerged from a therapy session in what a former custodian of the mine—a cousin of Pat Lewis's whom she unaffectionately refers to only as "previous management"—had christened the "Ionization Inhalatorium." (Lewis just calls it the radon room.) This is a ground-level, ten-by-forty-foot space with wall-to-wall carpeting, wood panelling, easy chairs, footrests, a card table, shelves filled with old magazines and *Reader's Digest* condensed books and board games, and, most important, vents that deliver radon-saturated air from the mine. The economics of the Free Enterprise are sufficiently marginal that, in the off-season, Lewis asks patrons to take their treatments in the radon room, which obviates the need to burn electricity inside the mine—where, eighty-five feet down, accessible by elevator, there's a four-hundred-foot-long drift furnished with more chairs, benches, tables, and bookcases.

McGowan had a medley of health problems—arthritic feet, emphysema, diabetes—and a faith in the general curative powers of radon. "I wasn't a true believer until I seen a gal that had one finger crooked as a snake," he said. "They'd all been crooked until she started going in the mine, and then there was one left that was all curled up. And she showed it to me and, just like that, it straightened out. That's what changed my mind." Before that, his imagination had been piqued by a Wade Lewis vintage story about a dog so hobbled with arthritis that it had to be coaxed into the mine backward. "After three or four days or weeks or whatever," McGowan said, "that dog was running and chasing cats." He repeated this anecdote verbatim the next day, when I joined him in the radon room, along with a married couple from Oregon. They were nearing the end of an eight-day sojourn and had brought along a geriatric Shih Tzu. "She's nineteen years old," the woman said. "She's got some sight in one eye and she's deaf. We only bring her in for an hour a day, but she seems to have perked up some. How? Well, she bounces around a little more, she acts younger. You'd never know she was nineteen by how she acts."

I collected more rejuvenated-pooch stories at the Merry Widow, Lone Tree, Earth Angel, and Sunshine mines—always the same basic theme, the only variation being that, instead of cats, the dogs would chase rabbits or chipmunks. The subtext of these testimonials was "O.K., maybe you think it's all in our heads, maybe you think it's all psychosomatic. But are you telling me that when a dog goes lame, comes to the mine, and then gets better, *that's* psychosomatic?"

Actually, I wasn't telling anybody anything; I was busy listening. Most radon-mine devotees are pensioners, most are middle-middle-class, and a high percentage come from Canada, where the government has a far less alarmist view of radon. I overheard many conversations about arthritis case histories, cross-country meanderings in recreational vehicles, and memories of the mines themselves. A man at the Merry Widow, who was wearing an "Official Montana Bullshit Cap," rhetorically asked no one in particular, "If this is quackery, why do the same people keep showing up year after year?" And I thought, Because it might be cold and dank inside, but the atmosphere is remarkably convivial, especially if you enjoy canasta and cribbage.

One afternoon at the Merry Widow, I met Ola Veselovsky, a hairdresser in her early seventies, who had driven that day with her husband from their home in Alberta. She'd been coming to the mines for fourteen years and had tried them all. Unlike the Free Enterprise, the Merry Widow is a walk-in mine. And, unlike all the other mines, it has a natural spring and built-in basins where people soak their hands and feet or, if they don't mind forty-degree water, their entire bodies. Veselovsky told me that on her pilgrimages she collects water in gallon jugs and brings it home. Drinking a cup a day throughout the year, she believes, helps deter migraine headaches, and she bathes her eyes with a daily dose in an eyecup. As a child, she was myopic and wore glasses, and when her reading vision began to deteriorate in middle age she needed a prescription to correct for that as well. But

"Shall we put it in play?"

since she began washing her eyes with Merry Widow radon water, she said, her vision had soared to twenty-twenty. Or perhaps there was an entirely different explanation. On a bookshelf inside the Merry Widow, along with back issues of *American Hunter*, *Arthritis Today*, *Golf Digest*, *National Geographic*, *Sunset*, and other magazines, I found a copy of "The Merry Widow Mine Cookbook," a compilation of recipes, contributed by mine guests, for dishes of possibly profound therapeutic value: Porcupine Meatballs, Tuna Cheese Chowder, Hamburger Soup, Iowa Ham Balls, Honey Almond Pork Chops, Hutterite Borscht, Strawberry Pretzel Salad, Unnamed Salad.

The Merry Widow changed hands this spring, when the longtime owners sold it to Dwayne and Diana Knutzen, a young couple from Washington State. Dwayne, who used to own a garbage-hauling business, has stayed busy lately reading books and articles about radon, many of which Pat Lewis referred him to. In addition to monitoring the growing literature about low-level ionizing radiation, Lewis invites scientists to the Free Enterprise and occasionally travels to scientific conferences out of state. This fall, she's going to Europe to visit radon spas in Czechoslovakia and Germany. The added value of her expertise, she feels, justifies the price at the Free Enterprise—five dollars an hour, versus three dollars and change at the competition (except for the Earth Angel, where the owner, an eccentric octogenarian who calls himself Buffalo Bill, charges only a dollar per day). But there's a tendency among radon-mine visitors, who are interested, above all, in a pain-free night's rest, not to want to know any more than they need to know. Lewis, meanwhile, looks at the numbers—last year, the Free Enterprise had taxable income of eleven thousand dollars—and wonders how much longer she can stay afloat.

My last day in Boulder, down in the mine at the Free Enterprise, I had a conversation with Art Berg, a retired electrical contractor who had flown in from New York the previous day, after calling Lewis and telling her that he regarded the radon mine as his "last hope" for relief from arthritis pain. A trim, talkative fellow in his mid-seventies, Berg wore blue slacks, a blue Hawaiian shirt, and a blue cap from the golf course on Long Island, where, when he feels up to it, he works as a ranger.

"When I took that trip on the plane yesterday, I thought I was gonna die," he said. "But I can already feel the difference. I thought I was gonna feel terrible because of the time-zone change, but I woke up at three in the morning and I could move around in the bed. I figure it's worth a shot.

"I first heard about these radon mines from a friend. A friend of his, a guy three years in a wheelchair, came here, nothing happened, and he went home and said what a lot of baloney it was. Then, three weeks later, he gets out of bed and he can walk. He walks into the kitchen and grabs his wife around the waist, and she almost has a coronary because he hadn't been like that in years."

Back at ground level, a half hour later, Berg sat outdoors in a lawn chair and chatted with Lewis. He recalled how, months earlier, he'd checked out the Free Enterprise Web site.

"We're probably 1,389,676 out of eight million radon sites," she said. "Most of them about how bad radon is for you."

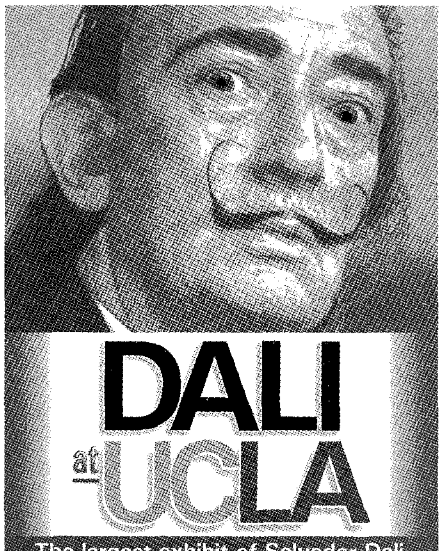
"Yeah, I read all the negatives," he said. "But, you know, water can be bad for you, too, if you drink too much of it."

"That's right. You could drown in it."

He wandered off to the housekeeping trailer he'd rented for the week, and Lewis remained seated, musing about her uncertain future. "I'd like to ride this thing out to the end," she said. "Because my goal is to try to do everything I can to bring it back. The science, if we can just turn the tide, with all the knowledge we've got, and convince people that this is something worth trying as a first step rather than as a last resort . . ."

"Then what?" I asked.

"I dunno." It was a sunny afternoon in the mid-seventies, a beautiful day to match the view. Five days earlier, it had snowed several inches, but, except for some traces on the Elkhorns, across the valley, you'd never know it. "I guess if we decided to move back to Seattle I'd be able to find work there. We figure if we sell the land here—we've got thirty acres—that would pay off our credit-card debt. Burdette and I have no heirs. Unless somebody needs a write-off really badly, I'm not gonna dump this on anyone. The problem is, even if you give it away it's a liability. After all, it's got radon." ♦



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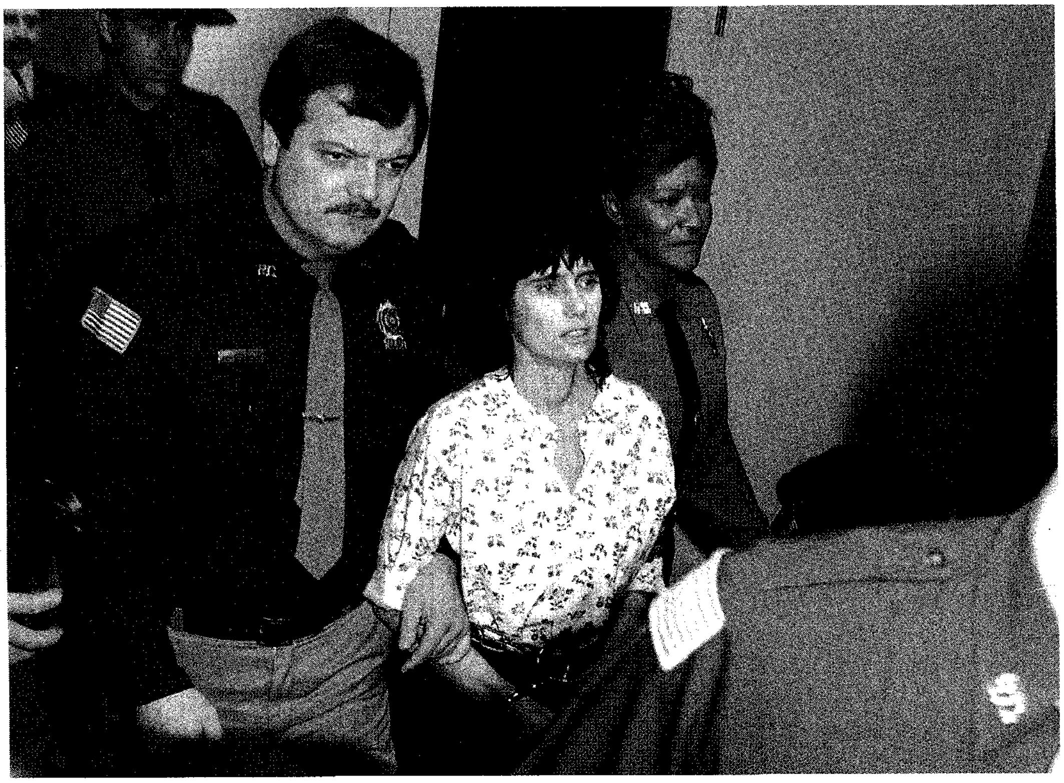
PROFILES

THE PRISONER

Kathy Boudin's dreams of revolution got her twenty years behind bars. Should she now go free?

BY ELIZABETH KOLBERT



At approximately 3:45 P.M. on October 20, 1981, a Brink's truck pulled into the parking lot of the Nanuet Mall, in Rockland County, New York, to make its last pickup of the day. As one of the guards wheeled out a handcart carrying three sacks of cash, a red Chevy van drew up alongside. Gunmen in the Chevy killed the guard standing watch, and, in a matter of seconds, shot out the armored truck's windshield, wounded the guard with the handcart, and made off with $1.6 million. They then drove to the rear loading area of a nearby Korvettes, where a U-Haul truck picked them up.

A teen-age girl spotted the gunmen as they were climbing into the back of the U-Haul. She tipped off the police, who rushed to a nearby entrance to the New York State Thruway, in Nyack. The first U-Haul that they stopped was driven by a white man in his thirties, accompanied by a woman, also white, who was wearing a cotton dress. Since witnesses had identified the gunmen as black, the police weren't sure that they had the right vehicle. They were trying, unsuccessfully, to pull open the back of the truck when the door swung up on its own. The gunmen inside again opened fire, leaving two policemen dead.

By any standards, the Brink's robbery was ugly and cold-blooded; by those of suburban Rockland County, it was violent practically beyond comprehension. One of the officers who stopped the U-Haul had spent much of that day dealing with an obscene phone caller, and what normally passed for a big crime in Nyack was a hot-wired car. In the chaos that followed the shooting, several of the gunmen escaped in other getaway vehicles or by commandeering the cars of passersby. Among those arrested at the scene was the woman in the cotton dress. She identified herself as Barbara Edson, though she was, in reality, Kathy Boudin.

Boudin had last used her own name nearly twelve years earlier, when a homemade bomb accidentally exploded in a Greenwich Village town house. Three members of the Weather Underground had been killed in the blast, two blown up so completely that they were not identified for several days. Just after the explosion, two young women, one half-dressed, the other naked, had wandered out of the rubble, dazed and bleary-eyed, only to then disappear. The naked one was Boudin.

The daughter of a prominent civil-liberties lawyer, Boudin had grown up in Manhattan, graduated magna cum laude from Bryn Mawr, and then, in the fashion of the sixties, become a revolutionary. One of her last acts before going underground had been to co-write a how-to book on dealing with an arrest; its frontispiece showed Liberty, supine, being gang-raped by the police. News accounts immediately after the Brink's

ABOVE: JOYCE DOPKEEN/NYT PICTURES; OPPOSITE: CO RENTMEESTER/TIMEPIX

Boudin at her 1981 arraignment (opposite); she had been underground since the 1970 explosion in a Greenwich Village town house.

robbery played up Boudin's sensational past, as well as the threat of further violence. The gunmen, it was revealed, were linked to the Black Liberation Army, a well-armed spinoff of the Black Panthers. One of the getaway cars was traced to an apartment in East Orange, New Jersey, where police found bomb-making manuals and materials, diagrams of six Manhattan police-precinct houses, and a hit list of multinational corporations. The cost of the security around the Brink's trial was so high that Rockland County eventually had to impose a sales tax to pay for it.

Under New York State law, a participant in a felony can be held responsible for any deaths that result. For her role in the robbery, Boudin, who was unarmed, pleaded guilty to one count of felony murder and was sentenced to twenty years to life. She has not spoken publicly since her sentencing, in 1984, or ever explained what purpose she thought the robbery would serve. Nor has she offered an account of what she believed she was accomplishing by remaining underground six years after the end of the Vietnam War and a year into Ronald Reagan's Presidency. On the morning of the robbery, Boudin had dropped off her fourteen-month-old son at the babysitter's, as usual, packing a little knapsack for him with a bottle of milk, a few diapers, and some pocket-size picture books in which he had recently shown an interest. On her way out, she had run into a friend, who was leaving her young son with the same sitter, and the two mothers had talked briefly about taking the boys to the park that afternoon.

To get into Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, New York State's only maximum-security prison for women, you first have to enter a bunkerlike building with a watchtower attached. Next to the door is a window with a counter where you can drop off food and clothes for prisoners. "No thong, fishnet, g-string or bikini panties," a handwritten sign posted nearby reads. "No lace or sheer bras."

Nearly eight hundred women are incarcerated at Bedford, which is in northern Westchester County, and behind the razor wire life very much goes on. Inmates have conjugal visits, and they produce babies, who are allowed to stay in the prison's nursery until they are up to eighteen months old. Prisoners work and take classes and play softball, and, if they are fortunate, they receive visits from the children they have left on the outside. AIDS has hit the prison population hard—it is estimated that nearly one in five female inmates in New York is H.I.V.-positive—and so, increasingly, women also get sick, die, and are mourned at Bedford.

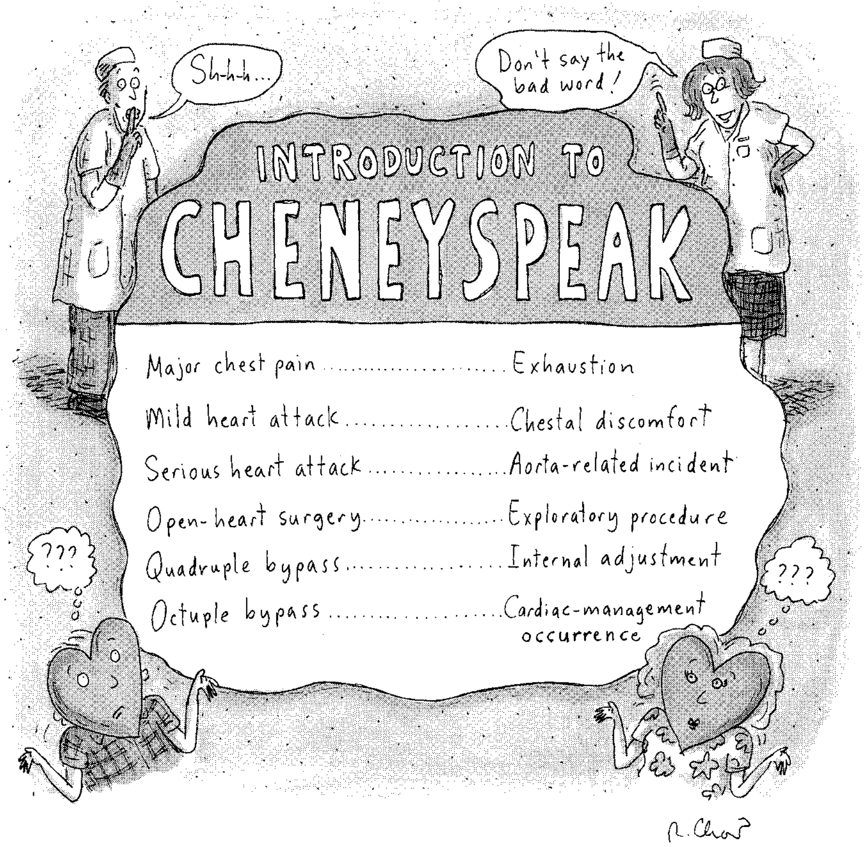
I interviewed Boudin four times at the prison, in a small room equipped with a few chairs and a round table. Now fifty-eight, Boudin has dark-blue eyes and wavy black hair that is streaked with gray. At each of our meetings, she had on the prison's standard-issue green pants, but on top wore something of her own: a purple velour pullover one time, a white blouse another. We also spoke a few dozen times by telephone. (Although prisoners cannot receive calls, they can make them, collect.) Talking on the phone, I was sometimes able to forget where she was, though not for long. Usually, Boudin would call at around ten o'clock at night, and at ten-twenty-five or so she would start to get nervous. At ten-thirty, she would have to run to her cell for a "count." At eleven o'clock, the line would go dead.

In the last seventeen years, Boudin has been outside Bedford only once, for a medical test. Owing to the nature of her crime, she is what is known as a "tracker"; every time she moves from one building to another, an officer calls ahead to her destination. She remains a tracker despite the fact that she has an exemplary disciplinary record, and, indeed, now lives in an honor unit.

While in prison, Boudin has earned a master's degree in adult education and literacy. She has co-written a handbook for inmates who have children in foster care. In the late nineteen-eighties, she helped design an AIDS support program that is now used as a model at prisons across the country, and, more recently, she created a program for mothers and their adolescent children, which is also expected to be copied nationally. She has published articles in the *Harvard Educational Review* and the *Journal of Correctional Education*, and she won a 1999 PEN award for her poetry. Her cell, which I never saw, but which she described to me, measures eight by ten feet, and contains a bed, a toilet, a sink that provides cold water, two metal lockers, and a plastic chair. With permission from the authorities, she has rigged up a desk by arranging a board on top of the lockers, but, because the lockers are too high, she has to sit on a pillow in order to work at it. Among the many ironies of Boudin's imprisonment at Bedford is that it has been the most productive period of her life.

Bedford has also provided Boudin with a version of the egalitarian society—albeit a state-enforced one—that, as a revolutionary, she was working toward. For the most part, she has embraced this. "Kathy has helped many people who have never had a helping hand in their lives," said Thea Jackson, a former state official, who for many years volunteered at Bedford. Prison rules made it impossible for me to talk to other current inmates, but I spoke to nearly a dozen former prisoners—black, white, and Hispanic—who had served time with Boudin, and they all talked about how much she had done for them. "The one person that was there for me all the time was Kathy," a woman who served twelve years on drug charges told me. "She speaks for women who are too afraid to speak themselves." Another former prisoner, who had spent fifteen years with Boudin and worked with her on the AIDS program, observed, "Coming from a different background and being Caucasian sometimes can cause conflicts for people, but for her it did not. There is probably not one person there who would say something bad about Kathy." The only inmate I heard Boudin herself speak at all disparagingly about was Jean Harris, who murdered Herman Tarnower, the Scarsdale-diet doctor, and was for several years Bedford's most celebrated inmate. Boudin described Harris as "independent," by which she clearly meant that she was a snob, or worse.

Boudin will come up for parole for the first time in August. Her many accomplishments at Bedford, her model behavior, and her efforts on behalf of her fellow-inmates are all strong arguments for parole, to the extent, that is, that any argument could make a difference. Her decision to speak to me was clearly made with this in mind. At the same time, whatever flexibility and small freedoms Boudin now enjoys are granted at the discretion of the authorities, who are not necessarily eager to see Bedford described as a place where former terrorists are permitted to be leaders. Once, when I asked one of the prison officials if I could watch a parenting class that Boudin was "running," the official immediately corrected me. Boudin, she said, was not "running" but merely "facilitating" it. (Permission to sit in on the class was denied.) On another occasion, I asked Boudin about something I thought she had "organized." "I am so afraid of the word 'organize,'" she said. "I feel like it's going to get me in trouble, because you're not allowed to organize. I'd rather say 'create projects.' Have I done that? Constantly."


Sh-h-h...
Don't say the bad word!
INTRODUCTION TO
CHENEYSPEAK
Major chest pain .... Exhaustion
Mild heart attack .... Chestal discomfort
Serious heart attack .... Aorta-related incident
Open-heart surgery .... Exploratory procedure
Quadruple bypass .... Internal adjustment
Octuple bypass .... Cardiac-management occurrence
???
???
R. Chast

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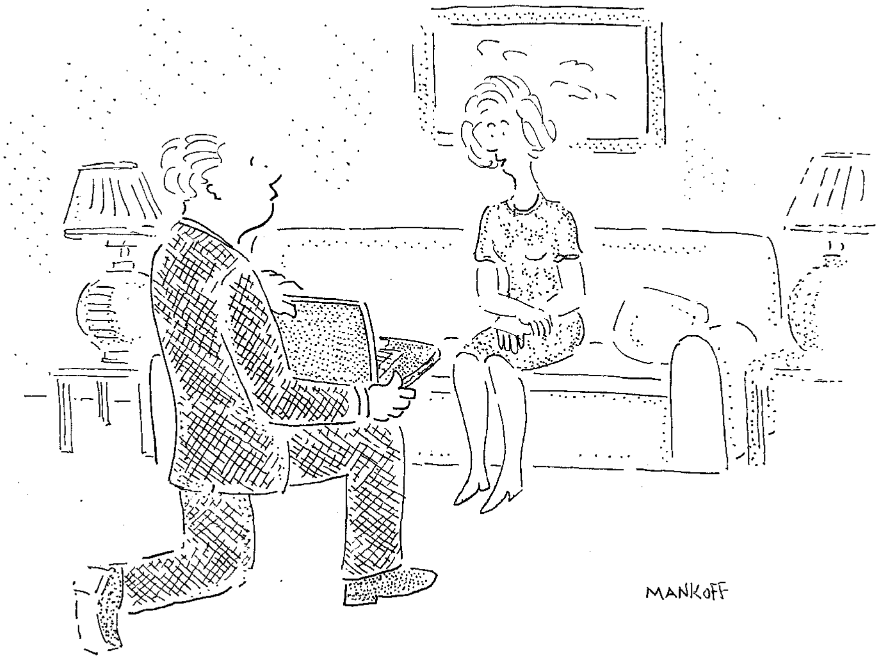
Boudin was born on May 19, 1943, and grew up in a brownstone on St. Luke's Place, opposite a playground, in Greenwich Village. She was an avid athlete, and her early ambition was to become the first bat girl in the major leagues. In those days, the Village was still bohemian, at least in the eyes of the F.B.I., and one afternoon, when Boudin was seven or eight, an agent came to the door. "My mother was very small—she was four feet eleven—and this guy was very big, and he was handsome," she recalled. "I could not understand what was happening in front of me. He said, 'I just wanted to ask a few questions about your neighbors,' and my mother said, 'I'm sorry, you'll have to leave.' I thought she was being rude to him, and I was really upset about it. I ran down the street, and I said to him, 'What would you like to know?' And he said, 'Well, I just want to know their names.' I told him. And he patted me on the head and said, 'You're going to be a very good American.'"

The Boudins could be described as a classically ambitious, talented, and liberal New York Jewish family, were it not that they were almost too ambitious, talented, and liberal. Boudin attended the Little Red School House, then Elisabeth Irwin High School, both progressive private schools where many of the teachers had been blacklisted. A typical field trip was a weeklong outing to a steel-mining town. Boudin's mother, Jean, was a poet, and her uncle was the journalist I. F. Stone. Judith Viorst, the writer, who babysat for Kathy, remembers her as "from the earliest days on very idealistic."

Boudin's father, Leonard, founded his own law firm in 1947, intending to pursue labor law, but rose to prominence during the McCarthy hearings. At one point, he held the record for the most clients represented before the House Un-American Activities Committee. When he was accused of being a Communist himself, he flatly denied it. "I have a basic cynicism for any political line," he later said. "I'm not a radical, because I don't know where the truth is."

Some of Leonard Boudin's clients, including Paul Robeson, Jessica Mitford, and Dr. Benjamin Spock, became family friends. Ellen Sklar, a schoolmate of Kathy's, describes the atmosphere in the Boudins' living room as being "like a salon—a little intimidating." Leonard and Jean encouraged Kathy and her older brother, Michael, to participate in the free-ranging discussions, and in general expected a great deal from them. "There was an understanding that, whatever they were going to do, they were going to contribute in a big way," Sklar told me. Michael, in fact, went on to graduate magna cum laude from Harvard and then to become president of the law review at Harvard Law School. He specialized in antitrust litigation until he was appointed to the federal bench by President George Bush, in 1990.

When Kathy was nine years old, she came home from school one day to find the apartment smelling of gas and her mother lying unconscious on the floor of the kitchen. Jean spent the next three years in psychiatric hospitals. During this time, Kathy developed a variety of phobias: she wouldn't ride the subway, and refused to stay in the apartment alone. She also resolved to go to medical school. "My fantasy of myself was all about being a doctor, and I think that came out of wanting to heal, to help my



"Great PowerPoint, Kevin, but the answer is no."

mother," she said. Her favorite movie, "Never Take No for an Answer," was about an orphaned Italian boy who takes his sick donkey to the tomb of St. Francis to pray for a cure.

When Jean came home, she tried to pick up with her children where she had left off, but found that her daughter wasn't interested. "I basically said, 'I did fine without you, so why do I need you now?' " Boudin recalled. "She wanted to take me to the dentist. I said, 'I don't need to go to the dentist with you. I've been going alone.' She would say, 'Well, let me buy you some comic books and then we'll go.' And I would know that she was bribing me and trying to get me, out of her own vulnerability, to let her do something, and I would get the comic books."

At school, Boudin was energetic, disciplined, and self-doubting. "I worked hard, but I always felt there were other people that were more talented," she said. "In any area that I could get an A, there was always somebody that maybe got a B or C, but they were really better." She worked one summer at a hospital, the next at a camp for handicapped children, and the summer after that at a blood bank. In 1964, following her junior year at Bryn Mawr, Boudin went west to spend the summer in Cleveland. There she lived in a communal house on the impoverished Near West Side and worked as a community organizer for what was called the Economic Research and Action Project, or ERAP. Her mother, in a piece for *Ms.* magazine that was published some ten years later, recalled her dismay. "I still shudder over a visit to their rooms in a Cleveland slum," Jean Boudin wrote. "It wasn't the roaches that bothered me, it was the rats. They lived with the poor, as the poor."

Even before her summer with ERAP, Boudin had begun to have second thoughts about a career in medicine. Although she had taken the requisite premed courses at Bryn Mawr, and had got good grades in them, she had come to believe that she wasn't talented enough—not realizing, as she now puts it, "that you don't have to be a great scientist to be a doctor." For Boudin, this fairly typical college experience was traumatic. She suffered from insomnia and went to see a therapist. In Cleveland, she found a new sense of purpose. "It was thrilling," she told me. "I felt like I was learning about the realities of class, of poverty. It was the discovery that there was a whole other world that I was living next to, part of, and didn't really know about."

ERAP was run by Students for a Democratic Society, the campus group that came to epitomize "the New Left." S.D.S. had set up similar projects in cities like Baltimore, Chicago, Newark, and Boston, all founded on two not necessarily compatible objectives. On one hand, student volunteers were supposed to help out on a practical level—for example, organizing neighborhoods to lobby for improved garbage collection. On the other, they were supposed to be building what they called, with a kind of grandiose innocence, an "interracial movement of the poor." Boudin recalls long debates with her fellow-ERAPers over virtually everything, including the politics of pocket change.

After graduating from Bryn Mawr, in 1965, she returned to the Cleveland project, this time focussing her efforts on welfare mothers. It was, she says, rewarding work, and she was basically happy at it, though the longer she was involved the harder it was for her to reach any decision about her future. "Here were people who could have been a housekeeper or a maid in the house that I grew up in," she told me. "I was living on the other side of that, and it made me feel guilty. I felt increasingly ambivalent about whether I could see myself moving toward a professional life. It seemed like it would perpetuate, in my own life, more privilege." As a senior in college, Boudin had applied to Yale Law School—and only Yale Law School—and been rejected. While in Cleveland, she applied to a variety of other law schools, only to defer her enrollment once she had been accepted. Eventually, she put in a desultory half term at Case Western Reserve, which she chose, she said, in part because of its low standards.

The Cleveland project that Boudin was working on collapsed in 1968, one of the many casualties of that extraordinary year. It was hard for any form of activism to measure up to the events of the time—the assassinations, the riots, the escalation of the Vietnam War. For S.D.S., the increasing pressure to act boldly resulted in dissension and, ultimately, factionalization. For Boudin, it caused more confusion. "When Cleveland dissolved, it definitely left me feeling very anxious," she told me. "What am I going to do and who am I?"

Now jobless, Boudin travelled to

Chicago, that August, for the Democratic National Convention. She was in Lincoln Park for the first violent clashes, where demonstrators threw rocks and were clubbed and teargassed by the police. She maintains that she was not involved in the violence but, rather, intimidated by it. "It was scary to me," she said. Still, a few days later, she managed to get arrested in an episode that is, as she describes it, both absurd and ominous.

"The next day, after the Lincoln Park situation, a couple of friends of mine and I were asked whether we would like to do some work that meant that we couldn't go in the demonstrations," she told me. "The word that was used was 'secret,' or something like that. I welcomed it. I thought because it was secret it had a sense of status to it, a higher level of commitment. The first thing we did was spray-paint the door of a C.I.A. office that nobody knew was really the C.I.A. The second thing we were asked to do was to take some liquid that smelled like rotten eggs and put it on the rugs of the delegates' cocktail lounges. We were in the Palmer House hotel, and I remember sitting in the lounge. The two women I was with were at different tables, and they got picked up by hotel security. I watched them be taken, and I remember sitting there and thinking, I could just leave, you know, and in a way I felt like that's what I should do. The other part of me felt like, well, if I leave, they'll be heroes, and nobody will know that I'm doing this work. And it was that anxiety: how am I going to prove that I'm a committed person? I was sitting there, and all of that went through my mind—it wasn't even through my mind, it went through my feelings—and I jumped up and followed them. I think I actually asked someone, 'Where's hotel security?' And I went in there and basically threw myself into the arms of the security. It took me a long time to tell that story because it's embarrassing. I felt embarrassed about the idea that, instead of being a hero, I was somebody who was looking for a way to be a hero."

"You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows" ran in the June 18, 1969, issue of *New Left Notes*. The sixteen-thousand-word manifesto, which took its title from Bob Dylan's "Subterranean Homesick Blues" and was written by eleven S.D.S.ers, called for an end to class privilege, bourgeois capitalism, and American imperialism. More immediately, it was a *cri de guerre* in the increasingly sectarian battle for control of the organization.

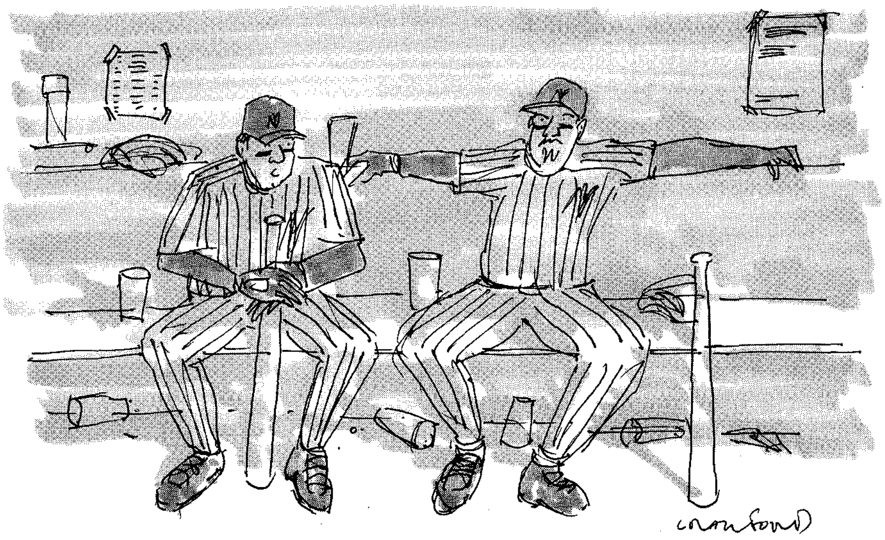
It is nearly impossible at this remove to write a sympathetic, or even entirely coherent, account of what Weatherman—or the Weathermen, or Weatherfolks, or, finally, the Weather Underground—was up to. Its founding document is almost too full of grand, synthetic claims about its place in history:

> The strategy . . . for developing an active mass base, tying the city-wide fights to community and city-wide anti-pig movement, and for building a party eventually out of this motion, fits with the world strategy for winning the revolution, builds a movement oriented toward power, and will become one division of the International Liberation Army, while its battlefields are added to the many Vietnams which will dismember and dispose of U.S. imperialism.

At the same time, the group was clearly making up its ideology as it went along, mixing Marx and Mao and Che with whatever else was at hand. According to Weather doctrine—at least some of the time—blacks formed a "colony" within the United States which made them part of "the international revolutionary vanguard." The American government was fated, in its efforts to maintain imperialist power, to overextend itself and fall, and it was the role of enlightened whites to hasten this process along. "The best thing that we can be doing for ourselves, as well as for the Panthers and the revolutionary black liberation struggle, is to build a fucking white revolutionary movement," proclaimed Bernardine Dohrn, a University of Chicago law-school graduate who later became the group's spokeswoman.

Much more than ideology, however, it was sex and violence and, more specifically, the sexiness of violence that the group contributed to the revolutionary cause. The Weatherman leadership swaggered around in sunglasses and leather, looking petulant and cool. Dohrn, before making the F.B.I.'s Ten Most Wanted list, posed for Richard Avedon in a miniskirt. (J. Edgar Hoover reportedly called her "La Pasionaria of the Lunatic Left.") At first, the group's posturing was cartoonish and, it is hard not to believe, self-consciously so. At Weatherman's National War Council, held in late 1969 in Flint, Michigan, a huge cardboard machine gun swung from the ceiling. The Manson murders were treated as an inspired political act. "Dig it," Dohrn declared. "First, they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them. Then they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach. Wild!" Delegates to the council took to greeting each other with spread fingers, signifying the fork.

Boudin made an unlikely Weather-



"You always rush out and high-five me when I homer. How 'bout a hug when I whiff?"

man. During her years in Cleveland, she had never taken much interest in S.D.S.'s internal ideological battles, or made any effort to play a leadership role in the organization, and her persistent self-doubt clashed with the group's sense of style. Yet, by the fall of 1969, she had become an active participant. Boudin attributes her involvement to Weatherman's not quite Marxist position that blacks, rather than workers, made up the revolutionary class. "With black people there was just an understanding that there was something fundamentally wrong with the whole system," she told me.

One of Boudin's first responsibilities was to help plan the Days of Rage, which was intended to "bring the war home" by replaying the Chicago protests of 1968. To build support for the event, Weathermen staged "jailbreaks," storming into classrooms in high schools and community colleges across the country, tying up the teachers and delivering lectures on sexism, racism, and imperialism. They also disrupted other groups' meetings and harangued the crowds for their lack of militancy. In one fairly typical incident, they took hostages at the American Friends Service Committee in Pittsburgh while they used the organization's office to run off leaflets.

For all their efforts, only about two or three hundred helmeted combatants showed up in Chicago that October, producing a protest that looked a lot like petty vandalism—kids trashing cars and stores on the city's Gold Coast. More than a hundred were arrested, among them Boudin, who was picked up while carrying a Vietcong flag through Lincoln Park. Two months later, in Flint, she played a minor role in the antics onstage, and came home to New York with mono and a case of V.D.

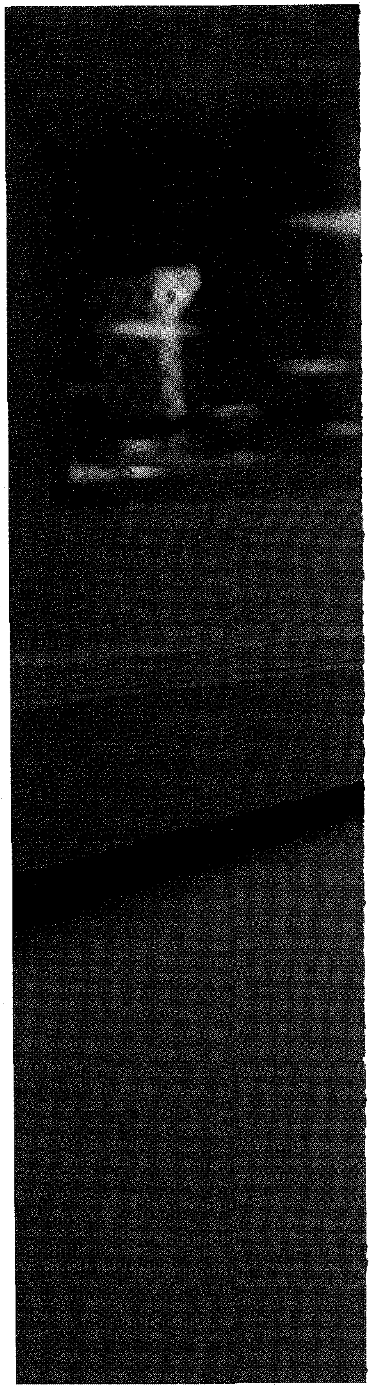
As far as bringing down the American government was concerned, Weatherman had no discernible effect. But, for the student movement, it was lethal. The faction took control of S.D.S. at a time when the organization had some three hundred chapters, with between thirty thousand and a hundred thousand members. It had no use for this national infrastructure and set about, quite deliberately, dismantling it. "I hate S.D.S.—I hate this weird liberal mass of nothingness," one Weatherman founder declared. "You don't need a rectal thermometer to know who the assholes are," came the bitter reply of a Wisconsin S.D.S. chapter.

How, exactly, Weatherman's cartoon violence turned into something more serious—the stockpiling of explosives and the building of bombs—is uncertain. It could be that the group felt trapped by its rhetoric, or that its leaders genuinely began to believe in it. What is clear is that Weatherman began to rationalize its failures, in classic cult fashion, by raising the stakes. According to its self-punitive and self-justifying logic, those truly committed to the cause ought to be willing to sacrifice everything for it; therefore, whoever made the biggest sacrifice was the most committed—a false syllogism, at best. As Bill Ayers, one of the members of the Weatherbureau, the group's high command, put it, victory would come only to those willing to throw it all away: "It's not a comfortable life, it's not just a dollar more, it's standing up in the face of the enemy, and risking your life and risking everything for that struggle."

One weekend last month, I went to visit Dohrn and Ayers, who were married in 1982. (Dohrn was in jail at the time, and received a furlough for the occasion.) The two now live in a turn-of-the-century row house in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago, along with Dohrn's mother, Dorothy, who suffers from Alzheimer's. They have raised three boys: two of their own, Zayd and Malik, and Boudin's son, Chesa, who has lived with them since he was fifteen months old.

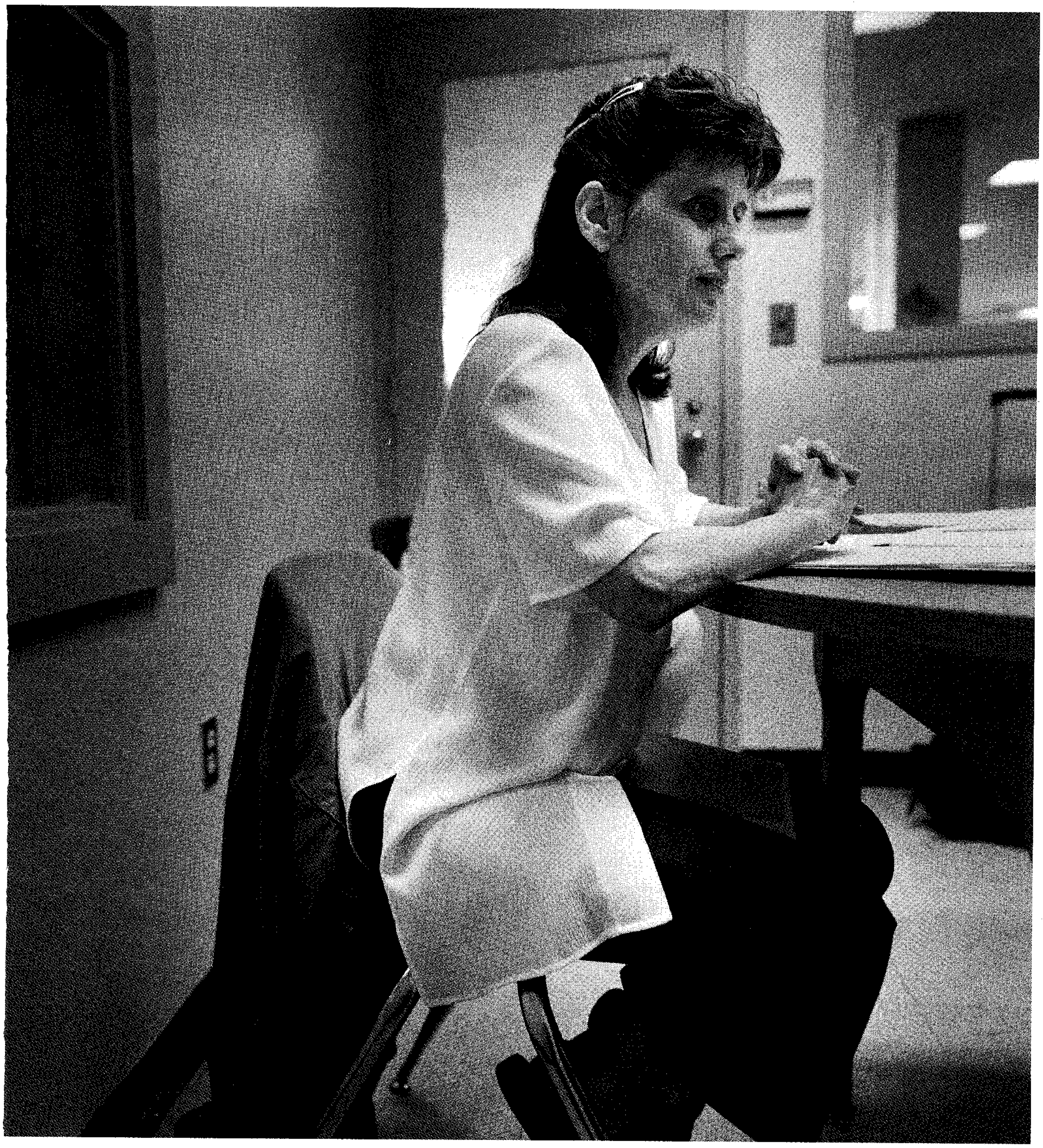
Dohrn teaches law at Northwestern University and is, at fifty-nine, still notably glamorous. Ayers, who is fifty-six, teaches education at the University of Illinois at Chicago; his business card reads "Distinguished Professor, University Scholar, Educator, Activist, Peacemaker, Flash-of-Lightning." The night I got to Chicago, the couple was giving a party, timed to coincide with the booksellers' convention, which was being held downtown; as I was arriving, Studs Terkel was just leaving. Ayers's memoir, titled "Fugitive Days," is coming out this fall, and he was handing his guests promotional stick-on tattoos of the Weatherman symbol—a three-colored rainbow crossed by a lightning bolt. He showed me a larger version of the symbol tattooed on his upper back.

The fate of Weatherman's members since the group's breakup, in 1976, bears, it seems, an almost inverse relationship to their original roles in the organization. Though far and away the most famous of the group, Dohrn served only one jail stint of any significance—seven months for refusing to coöperate with a federal grand jury investigating the Brink's case. Ayers has



Boudin at Bedford Hills Correctional Facilit served practically no time, despite cheerfully admitting in his memoir to, among other illegal acts, conspiring to bomb the Pentagon. His best friend and fellow Weatherbureau member Jeff Jones, who is now an environmental lobbyist in Albany, was charged with illegal possession of explosives; he received probation and community service. "We are hugely lucky," Ayers told me when I asked about the way things have played out. Meanwhile, other members of the group, including Boudin's ex-partner—and Chesa's father—David Gilbert, who drove the U-Haul during the Brink's robbery, are serving sentences of seventy-five years to life.

At the time of the Brink's holdup, Dohrn and Ayers were living in Manhattan and had been above ground for nearly a year. They recalled going to visit Leonard and Jean Boudin shortly after the robbery and finding Jean, at that point nearly seventy years old, on the floor with Chesa, trying to figure out how to put on a Pampers. A few weeks later, Chesa went to live with Dohrn and Ayers. Virtually all of the grandparents, in one way or another, opposed the arrangement. Ayers remembers that his father, a former chairman of Commonwealth Edison, thought Chesa might be happier if he were adopted anonymously and allowed to forget his past. Leonard Boudin, for his part, used to have Dr. Spock visit Dohrn and Ayers's fifth-floor Harlem walkup to keep tabs on the boy's development. "He was in anguish about the fact that we were raising his grandson," Ayers said. "And also that we weren't cultivated enough and New York enough," Dohrn



edford has provided Boudin with a version of the egalitarian society she was working toward. Photograph by Larry Fink.

added. (Leonard died in 1989, Jean in 1994.)

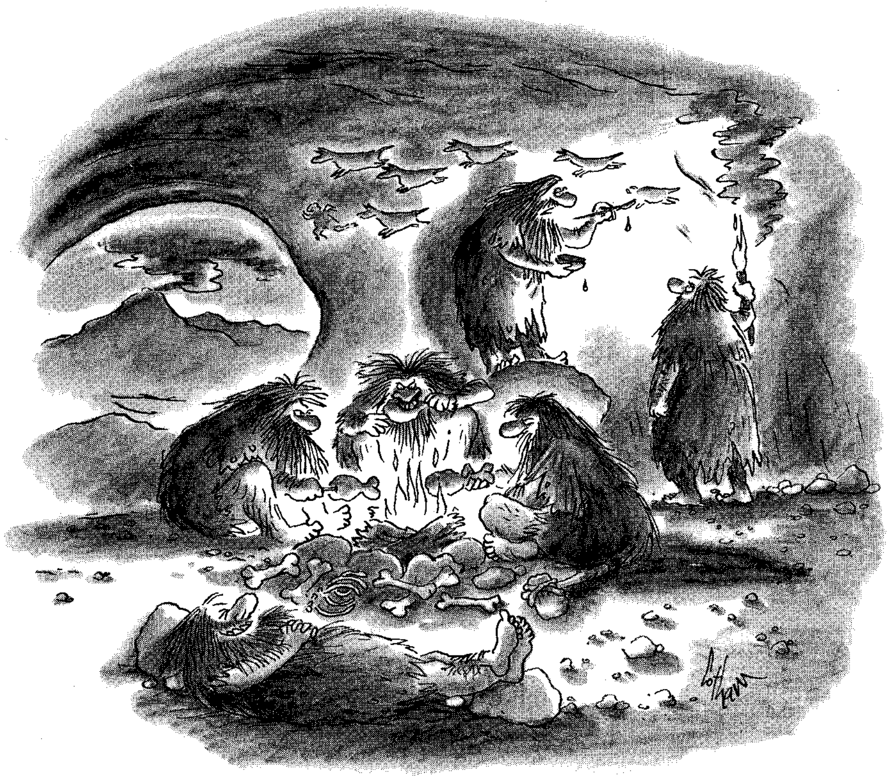
Chesa was not an easy child—he threw tantrums, refused to wear a coat, even in the middle of the winter, cursed out his teachers, and needed special tutoring. He is now twenty, and a history major at Yale. In her conversations with me, Boudin referred to Chesa constantly, Dohrn and Ayers only rarely. Chesa remains quite close to Boudin, but he calls her "Kathy" and refers to Dohrn as "Mom."

"It couldn't be more complicated," Dohrn told me. "It's totally loaded in every way. And everything that we do that's wonderful should be her doing it, and every risk that we took should be us paying a heavy price for it. And in that sense Kathy's been unbelievably generous and transcendent, and we've all struggled over those obvious tensions and resentments and inevitable conflicts, both in every phone conversation and in the broader, global sense."

Dohrn and Ayers's luck runs, in a perverse form, all the way back to the town-house bombing, in March, 1970. Before the explosion, Weatherman was preparing to commit more serious acts of violence, though to what purpose remained unresolved. Some argued that the violence should be essentially symbolic, a form of guerrilla theatre; others were intent on turning Weatherman into a band of actual fighters. The bomb that was being prepared in the town house was meant for a nearby Army base, and its design—roofing nails wrapped around dynamite—signalled an intention to inflict casualties. When it went off, it killed Terry Robbins, one of the more militant Weathermen, as well as Ted Gold and Ayers's girlfriend at the time, Diana Oughton. In his memoir, Ayers fantasizes that it was Oughton who set off the bomb, and that she did so deliberately, to prevent still more tragic consequences. "The town house knocked us back and forced us to reassess ourselves, pulling us back from that particular abyss," he told me.

For Boudin, the blast had the reverse effect. Up to that point, she had been a secondary figure in Weatherman, and, as its leaders had begun, one after another, to go underground, she had, she says, felt left out. "Occasionally I would see people that I knew and the next day they weren't there, and I was still there," she told me. "And I felt bad, because I felt that something was happening and I didn't know what it was."

Boudin was taking a shower at the time of the explosion. She maintains that she had had no idea what was going on in the town house's basement and that she had initially thought the blast was an earthquake. (She was never charged in connection with the bombing, although the other survivor, Cathy Wilkerson, whose father owned the building, eventually served nearly a year in prison for it.) When Boudin emerged naked from the wreckage, Susan Blanchard Wager, one of Henry Fonda's ex-wives, who lived a few houses down, took her in and gave her some old clothes; Wager went back outside for a moment, and Boudin slipped away. No one who had seen her come out of the house knew who she was; she was identified a few days later, when a dentist's appointment card with her name on it was found in the debris. Despite the intense publicity, Boudin, who was staying with her parents, kept the appointment. She recalls that she felt traumatized but, at the same time, oddly relieved. "My name appeared in the newspaper," she told me, "and I said, 'Oh, good, now I can go underground.' "



"Maybe someday we could set aside a cave just for art."

"Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization," a now declassified F.B.I. report, was written by the bureau's Chicago office in 1976. It attempts to detail every significant trip abroad made by every member of the group, going back nearly ten years. The file runs to several hundred pages, and, even so, represents only a tiny fraction of the F.B.I.'s efforts. The bureau planted a mole inside Weatherman, conducted what are now known to have been extensive illegal surveillance operations, and distributed photos of twenty Weatherman members, including a stunned-looking Boudin, on "Wanted" posters around the country. Either the F.B.I. had its own reasons for wanting to fail or it was phenomenally incompetent. Weatherman was made up of middle-class kids with no prior training in covert activities, yet with a few exceptions they managed to elude capture.

Boudin describes life underground as uneventful to the point of being dull. In the early years, operating under a variety of aliases, she went to Mexico to practice her Spanish, picked grapes with migrant workers in California, and worked at a Massachusetts hospital, drawing blood.

At one point, the Weatherbureau sent her around to campuses and community groups to try to build support for the antiwar movement, but without the benefit of normal communication tools, like an address or a telephone. "Much of our time was spent continuing to try to play a leadership role above ground, and yet we were underground," Boudin told me. "It didn't make sense, but it's a lot of what we did."

Meanwhile, bombs were going off. All told, Weatherman took credit for some two dozen blasts, including one in the offices of the National Guard in Washington, D.C., and another at police headquarters in Manhattan. Partly through good planning and partly through good fortune, the group avoided killing anyone, and mostly just damaged buildings. In September, 1970, it teamed up with an organization that called itself the Brotherhood of Eternal Love to spring Timothy Leary from prison in California and spirit him to a Panther compound in Algeria. The following March, Weatherman bombed the Capitol. "We have attacked the Capitol because it is, along with the White House and the Pentagon, the worldwide symbol of the government which is now attacking Indochina," Weather Underground Communiqué No. 8 declared. A month later, according to F.B.I. documents, Boudin's fingerprints were found in an apartment that had been used as a "bomb factory" in San Francisco.

Boudin says that she herself never made or planted a bomb, although as a member of Weatherman she implicitly supported such activities. In 1970, she was one of twelve members of the group indicted on federal conspiracy charges. (These indictments, like most of the other charges against the Weathermen, were later dropped, because of the illegality of the methods used to obtain them.) "There were thousands of acts of violent protest happening all around," Boudin told me. "Every day, you would hear about acts of violence, so it didn't feel unusual in a certain way." Together with several other members of the group, in 1974 Boudin wrote a book, "Prairie Fire," which presents American history as a series of imperialist adventures, and in 1975 she appeared—behind a scrim—in "Underground," a documentary by Emile de Antonio. Although the film seems to have been intended to explain, if not justify, the group's agenda, Weatherman's fundamental incoherence made this difficult. Halfway through it, Boudin talks about what it feels like to be inside an explosion. "It's that kind of time that can't be counted on a clock," she says. "It's that kind of time that seems to go on forever, and you have a chance to see your whole life in that moment, and also the lives of your friends."

"Now, stop me if I get to jabbering and start a war."

As desultory as these activities may have been, they were, in relation to what followed, comparatively purposeful. With the end of the Vietnam War, in 1975, Weatherman lost whatever focus it had left, and disintegrated. The old leadership—Dohrn and Ayers included—was charged with betraying the movement's causes. Accused of representing "agents of the bourgeoisie within the revolution," they were eventually purged in a coup engineered by Clayton Van Lydegraf, a sixty-one-year-old Maoist. Boudin considered giving herself up, but decided against it. She took a series of menial jobs, less because of the difficulties of working under an alias than out of a kind of politicized asceticism. For a while, she lived with friends in Ohio and cleaned houses, a job she says she wasn't particularly good at. By her own account, she would have found it easier to come back above ground if her life underground hadn't been so ineffectual.

"The very status of being underground was an identity for me," she told me during an interview at Bedford. "It was a moral statement. Three years, five years, eight years, ten years, eleven years—that was who I was, and it didn't really matter if I was doing anything. If I had been doing any of the kinds of things that I do here," she went on, "or any of the kinds of things I imagine doing when I go home, I wouldn't have felt the way I felt. In the world we live in, you make a difference in a small way, but it feels like you are doing something. But I was making a difference in no way, so then I elevated to great importance the fact that I was underground."

Several weeks ago, I went to a meeting in the Valley Cottage Public Library, a mile from the site of the Brink's robbery. Sitting around the table were about a dozen family members of the murdered men, as well as a local police chief, a district state assemblyman, and representatives from several law-enforcement agencies. The purpose of the gathering was to come up with a strategy to prevent Boudin from getting parole.

Initially, there had been some resistance to my attending. Just last January, Susan Rosenberg, who was indicted in connection with the Brink's case and later convicted on a federal weapons charge, was freed from prison, a beneficiary of the final frenzied round of Clinton pardons. In Nyack, many felt betrayed by the commutation of Rosenberg's sentence, and by what they saw as the media's sympathetic coverage of it. At the start of the meeting, Diane O'Grady, the widow of Sergeant Edward O'Grady, one of the slain policemen, came over to show me a photo of her family taken shortly before her husband was killed. As it happens, I have three sons who are now much the same age as the three O'Grady children were then, and when she handed me the picture I nearly started to cry. This seemed to reassure her.

All told, the robbery left nine children fatherless, and three of them were at the library that evening. Michael Paige and Peter Paige, Jr., the two sons of the slain Brink's guard, had driven up from New Jersey with their mother, Josephine. Gregory Brown, the son of Police Officer Waverly Brown, was there alone. His presence—Brown is black—pointed to one of the crime's crueller ironies.

Talk around the table alternated between halfhearted efforts at objectivity and expressions of visceral hatred. "We have the right to be bitter," Jim Kralik, Rockland County's sheriff, said. "We have the right to be frustrated. We have a great deal of right, especially you, the families, to have the pain. But the attitude we should take is that we want appropriate justice."

"That Susan Rosenberg was released for clemency is an absolute friggin' disgrace," John Dillon, a retired police captain, said. "I cannot say that loud enough and long enough. This is a network. They came into Rockland County, they killed us, they stopped us one day, but guess what? Rockland County reached out, and every friggin' one of them was caught. Some of them almost got out because of the system. She's not going to get out. She should stay in prison for the rest of her friggin' life and rot. People died, for what? So that these scum could continue their cause against the American dream?"

Among the claims I heard over the course of the evening was that Boudin was still a revolutionary; that her work at the prison was intended only to impress the parole board; that she was utterly unrepentant; and that she was violent and remained a danger to society. Someone even asserted that she had lied about her birthday, choosing May 19th only because it was the birth date of Ho Chi Minh and of Malcolm X. Pointing out that these claims were unfounded would have been not only inappropriate but also irrelevant. The friends and families of the victims are not interested in what Boudin is really like, nor, understandably, are they interested in becoming interested. They want the empathy to run the other way, to force her to experience something of the losses they've endured. "She raised her son while in prison," Diane O'Grady said at one point. "So this child was held and loved, and yet what about our kids? The only sentence that is justified to any of us is life."

Among the poems that Boudin has written while at Bedford is a series that deals directly with her crime. In one fragment, narrated from the perspective of a woman riding in the cab of a truck, Boudin imagines—or describes—what it feels like to be stopped at gunpoint:

I look into the eyes of guns
and wonder
will they shoot me
My hair is taut
my skin is stretched
my eyes are popping
my breath comes out in short puffs
Clang metal and metal.

The central event in her life, the Brink's robbery is also the one Boudin had the most trouble talking to me about. There are many quite practical reasons I could imagine for this, some bearing on parole and some on her relations with others, particularly David Gilbert, the father of her child. But her difficulty, I came to feel, also had to do with the same needs that had brought her to Nyack in the first place.

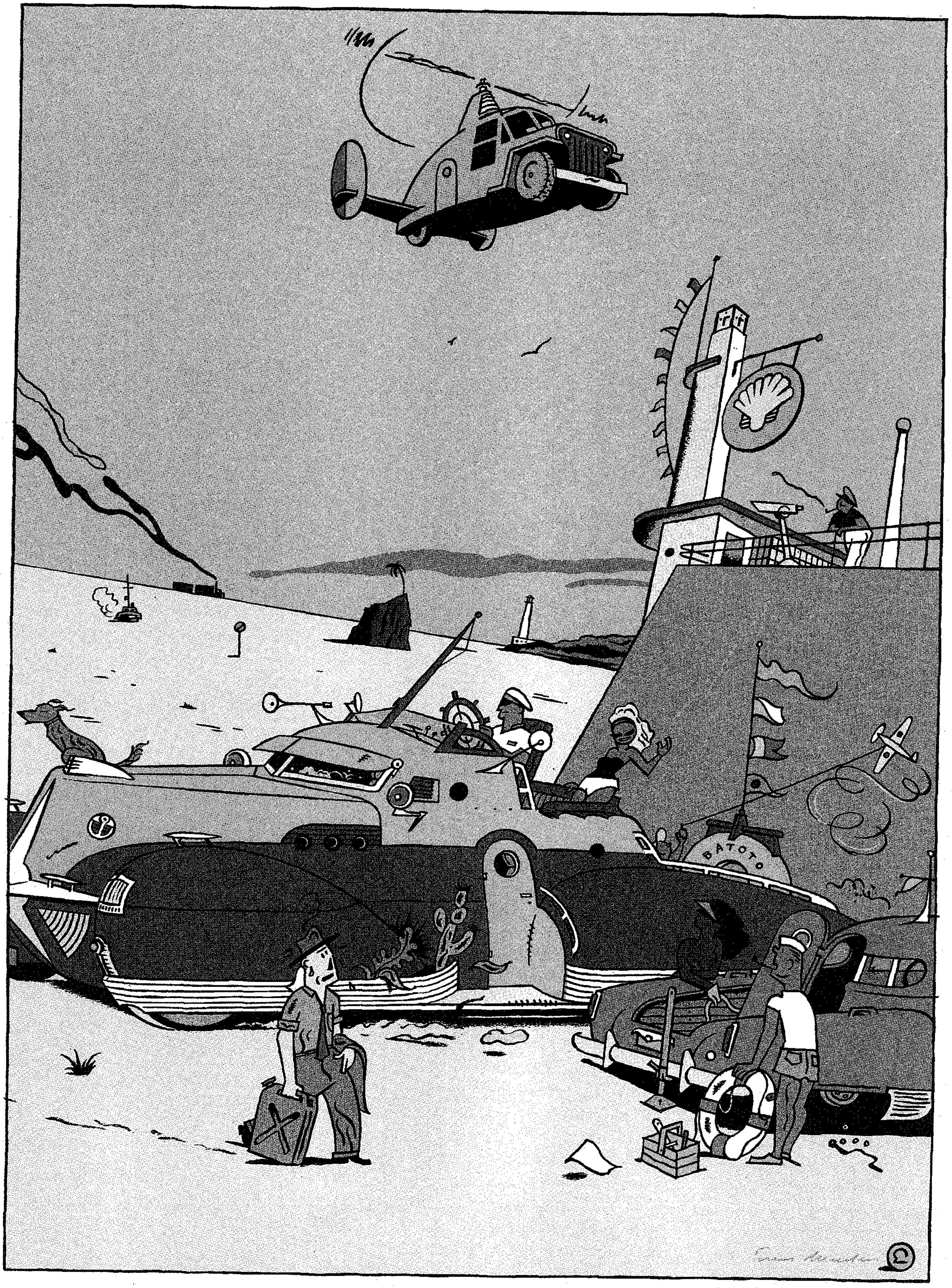
Boudin is, in her recounting of the crime, a strangely passive figure. She is an even more strangely uninformed one. She didn't know, she maintains, exactly who was committing the robbery, how the perpetrators planned to go about it, or what they hoped ultimately to do with the money. She now characterizes this ignorance as "sick," but says that at the time it made sense to her. She had read widely about the Underground Railroad during her years as a housecleaner and, she told me, had come to identify with the white women who were involved in it, sometimes at great personal cost. She also used religious analogies to try to convey something of her mind-set: "Had I been Roman Catholic, perhaps I would have been a nun" was a thought she voiced to me more than once.

"I developed a politics: the way for me to enact this issue of empowerment was to put myself at the service of a Third World group," she explained. "My way of supporting the struggle is to say that I don't have the right to know anything, that I don't have the right to engage in political discussion, because it is not my struggle. I certainly don't have a right to criticize anything. The less I would know and the more I would give up total self, the better—the more committed and the more moral I was."

The "Third World group" Boudin chose to submit herself to was the remnants of the Black Liberation Army. Organized in the early nineteen-seventies, the group had taken as one of its missions the murder of police officers, in the name of liberating African-American communities. By the mid-seventies, most of its original leaders were dead or behind bars, and others had hooked up with a gang of armed robbers, known among themselves as "the family," who specialized in sticking up armored trucks. Their code name for the Brink's job was "the Big Dance," and had it been successful it's likely that some of the proceeds would have gone to an acupuncture center in Harlem and some to buying cocaine for "family" members. When I pressed Boudin on her choice, asking how, of all possible groups, she could have chosen this one, I was met with a long and pained silence.

At the time that Boudin began her association with the B.L.A., she was, she says, taking steps toward establishing a normal life. She had recently moved back to New York, where she had renewed contact with her parents, visiting them for the first time in years. She had set about repairing her relationship with Gilbert, with whom she had long been involved. And she had had Chesa. Though her efforts were

LOW TIDE BY EVER MEULEN



"I remember you vividly in preschool, when you played the earth and I starred as the sun."

• •

halting and tentative, she had begun looking for an occupation, first getting certified as a paralegal, then hanging out at Sarah Lawrence to see if she could imagine herself back at graduate school. She had also begun taking Valium for panic attacks that she attributes to the strain of trying to begin again.

She was approached about the Brink's robbery, she claims, just twenty-four hours beforehand, and received her instructions while sitting in a Manhattan restaurant. She was supposed to ride in the U-Haul to Nanuet, and then wait with Gilbert, several blocks away, while the actual holdup took place. The idea was that the white couple in the cab would act as a cover, throwing off the police, who would be looking for a band of black gunmen.

About the robbery itself, Boudin has little to say. When the first gun battle took place, she was, she says, too far away to know what was going on. She claims that she was still unaware that anyone had been shot when the U-Haul was stopped by the police near the Thruway, and that she missed the second shoot-out as well. She recalls being pulled over, getting out of the truck with her hands up, and then, in response to loud noises from the back, running in fear. She was not, she insists, trying to escape. She made it as far as the edge of the Thruway, where she was picked up by an off-duty corrections officer who happened to be driving by.

Several of Boudin's co-defendants, including Gilbert, refused to attend their trials, arguing that they weren't criminals but political prisoners and should be tried in The Hague. Boudin left her defense to her father. The lawyers he picked for the case managed to win an unprecedented two changes of venue, and ultimately negotiated the deal under which Boudin, who had been charged with three counts of felony murder, pleaded guilty to just one, and to one count of first-degree robbery. (The agreement rested on the argument—devised by Boudin's lawyers—that she could not be held accountable for the deaths of the police officers, because she had, in effect, surrendered before they were shot.) The victims' families have always resented the plea bargain, viewing it as another example of Boudin's privileged treatment.

In the eleven years leading up to the robbery, Boudin had more or less made a profession out of misrepresenting herself, deceiving probably hundreds of people, some to quite serious effect. Remarkably, at the time of the holdup, she was sharing an apartment with a reporter, who, thanks to her relationship with Boudin, subsequently lost her job at the Stamford, Connecticut, *Advocate.* Some key details of Boudin's account of her role in the crime have been challenged by witnesses. One of the officers at the scene testified that before the shoot-out began Boudin had asked the police to put away their guns, although he did not make this claim until more than a year after the robbery. The corrections officer who picked Boudin up on the side of the road reported hearing her shout, "He shot him, I didn't shoot him"—something she denies having said.

But, even if one accepts Boudin's version of events, her interpretation of them is problematic. In spite of everything that has happened, she still wants to see herself as a fundamentally good person. Inevitably, this leads her—against her will, even—to something that can sound dangerously close to evasion. "I was responsible for not being responsible," she told me at one point, a formula she clearly intended to acknowledge her culpability, but which also had the effect of denying it.

In her poetry, Boudin's conflict is settled through inversion. The narrator who sits in the cab of a truck in a print skirt is not a participant in a deadly crime but the victim of terrifying violence:

The truck slowly
slowly
Came to a stop
Along with throbbing of my pulse.
I stared through the rays of the sun
into a barrel of a shot gun
aimed at my head
through the glass.

The last time I went to speak with Boudin, she was looking forward to a visit from Chesa the next day. He has been coming to see his mother—and also his father, who is now in Attica—since he was a toddler. Typically, they meet in a large cafeteria-like room with vending machines along one wall, though they occasionally also have overnights, known as "trailer visits," for the mobile homes on the prison grounds in which they take place.

Chesa is, by the standards of late adolescence, forgiving toward his parents—both sets of them. He has had to answer questions about his mother throughout his life. "When I was five, six, seven, I would basically tell people that it was like Robin Hood, or it was supposed to be like that, which of course is a vast oversimplification," he told me over lunch one day in New Haven. "But how else are you going to explain something like that?" Recently, he has begun speaking around the country about his experiences and about the problems facing children of inmates.

Chesa's arguments for his mother's release are those one would expect—that she's been punished enough, that it does the victims no good to keep her inside, that a year at Bedford costs more than a year's tuition at Yale—though he is realistic enough to know that these are not the grounds on which parole decisions are made. "I don't expect the 'life' at the end of her sentence to become a reality," he said. "But I know that it's a possibility. I try not to have any illusions about what's going to happen."

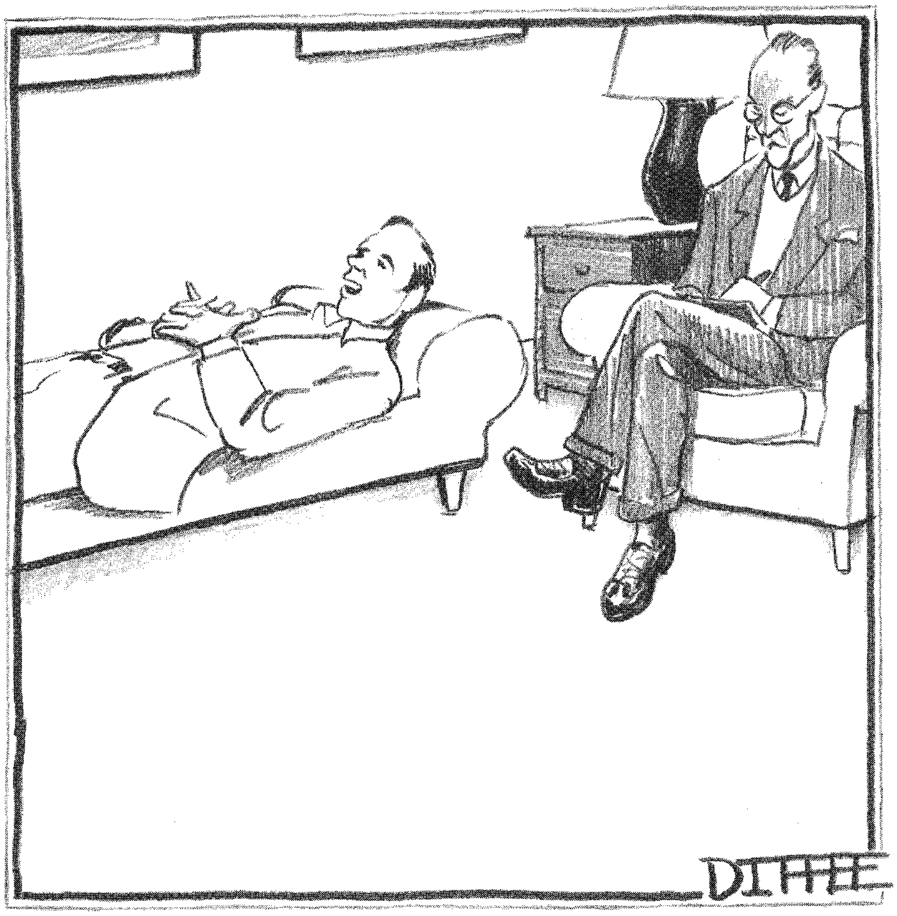
In nearly thirty hours of conversation, I came to feel many things about Boudin, some of them contradictory. Often, I felt sorry for her and, on several occasions, I offered her the opportunity to feel sorry for herself. She didn't take me up on it. I never heard her complain about prison or suggest that her punishment was unfair. On the contrary, she said that in many ways she felt lucky in the community she had found at Bedford, and in the richness of her life there. She told me that when she was first arrested, and held in solitary confinement, she had found herself too distracted and despairing even to read, and that when she finally did pick up books again she could handle only one kind of story—"books about people who have had terrible accidents and have overcome them, in the sense that they've figured out how to build a life, even if it's not the life that they wanted."

Only three times during our often difficult conversations did Boudin weep. Once was while she was showing me a scrapbook. Among the poems and quotations that she had copied into it was a passage about El Salvador and the dreams and hazards of revolution. She started to read it to me but got only as far as a description: "mistakes so terrible that forgiveness may be impossible, and self-criticism hollow."

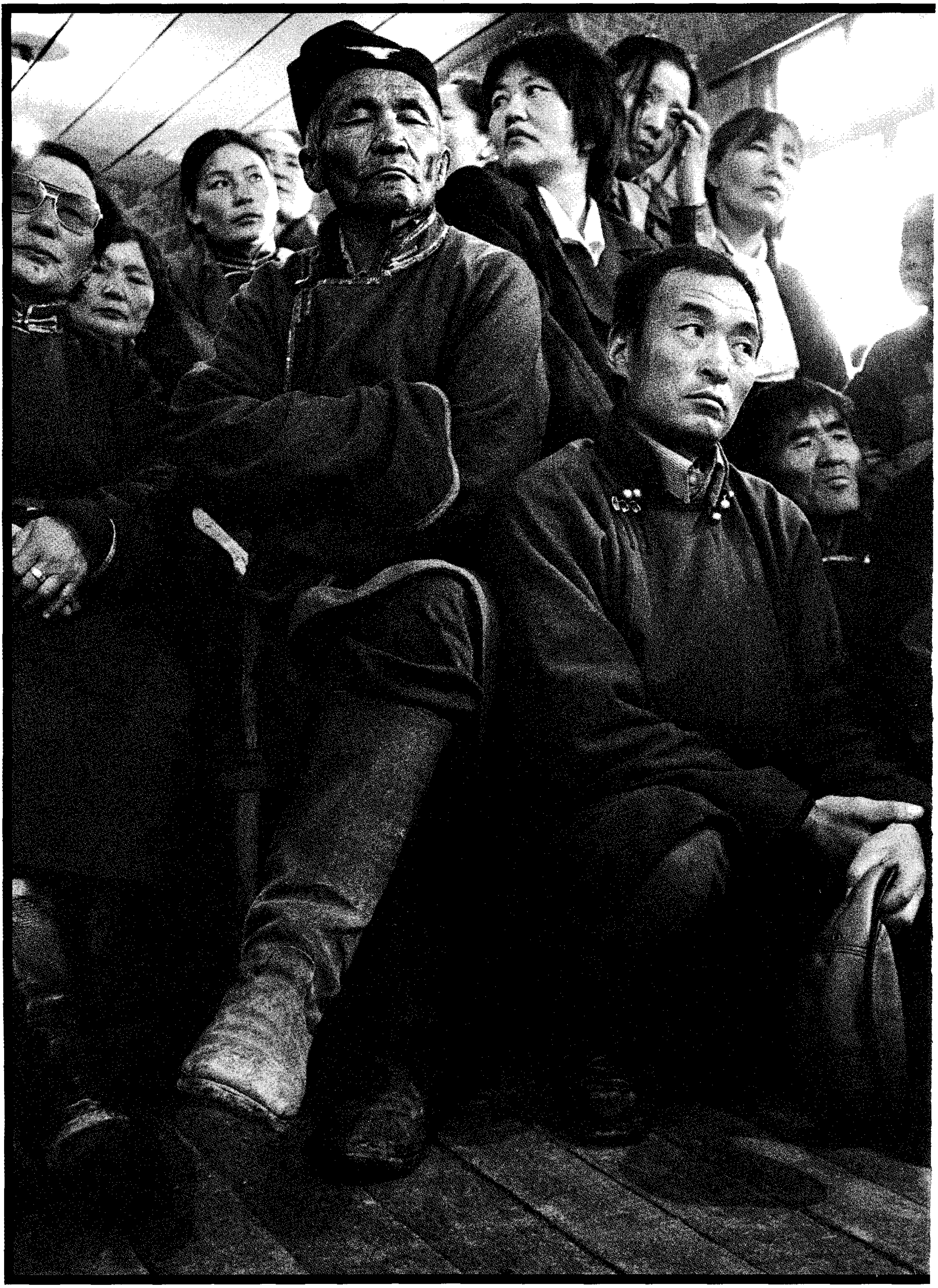
The second time occurred when we were discussing the days immediately following the robbery. Her mother had come to visit her in jail and had told her that although she had done a terrible thing, she had an obligation to go on, for the sake of her son. Boudin said that she now realized how horrifying it must have been for Jean, who had tried to destroy herself, to see her daughter repeat the pattern.

The third time Boudin broke down, she was talking about an exercise she had completed for a writing workshop led by the playwright Eve Ensler. The assignment had been to describe what it would be like finally to leave Bedford. "When I walk out of the prison gate I will gently touch the air that surrounds me like a shawl," Boudin wrote. "It is autumn and the leaves are floating in circles of reds, browns, and oranges. I am with my child in freedom, a reunion with my family and friends who have lived these decades with me."

Along with the work of several other prisoners, Boudin's piece was read almost two years ago at a Lincoln Center benefit. In it, she goes on to imagine, in terms borrowed from Virgil and Dante, a river crossing to a place where "the flames burn, with spirits." As in the old myths, there can be no going forward without first going back: "My journey cannot be taken without facing your eyes, and those of your loved ones who went on with their lives without you. If only there were a place where the living and the dead could meet, to tell their tales, to weep. I would reach for you—not so that you could forgive me, but so that you could know that I have no pride for what I have done, only the wisdom and regret that came too late." ♦



"I have an imaginary friend. He's a real person—he just isn't really my friend."



MATRIX

LETTER FROM MONGOLIA

THE NOMAD VOTE

Campaigning for the Presidency in the land of Genghis Khan.

BY PETER HESSLER

The most astute political pollster in Mongolia is a half-Jewish Mongol named Sumati. He runs a public polling organization called the Sant Maral Foundation, which consists of him, two assistants, two computers, and two telephones, all operating out of one room in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. From there, Sumati surveys a country more than twice as big as Texas. He has done independent advance polling for the past three Mongolian national elections, two of which involved major changes of political power, and, in each case, his results predicted the winner to within fewer than 2.8 percentage points.

"Sumati's bloody good," one Western diplomat told me recently. "He was dead on with that parliamentary election last year. Nobody listened to him, but he was right." I met Sumati in April, when I arrived in Mongolia to cover the Presidential election, which was held on May 20th. There were three candidates: the incumbent, Bagabandi, representing the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (M.P.R.P.); Gonchigdorj, the choice of the Democratic Party; and Dashnyam, of the Civil Will Party. (Most Mongolians use only one name.) During our first meeting, Sumati predicted that the final results would be extremely close to the findings of his initial poll, which had shown fifty-eight per cent of the vote going to Bagabandi. When I asked if Sumati had used random-sampling techniques, he gave me a look that suggested that this wasn't the brightest question he'd ever heard.

"A sample-collection method doesn't work in Mongolia, because half the population are nomads," he explained. "You can't do random sampling with nomads. For random sampling, you need to have a situation where every person in the target population has an equal probability of getting into your sample. But in Mongolia you can't predict where the nomads will be."

Sumati is forty-five years old, and he speaks excellent English, with a Russian accent. His mother was Latvian and his father was Mongolian, and they met while attending university in Moscow. Sumati grew up in Ulaanbaatar, and later he did research in applied mathematics, social sciences, and artificial intelligence in St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is a thin man with high cheekbones, sallow skin, bushy black hair, and gray-green eyes. He looks a lot like what you'd expect a Mongolian Jew to look like. Professionally, his unusual appearance is something of a handicap, because it prevents him from doing his own polling. (His assistants distribute the questionnaires.) "I look like a foreigner," he said. "It creates a bias, I'm afraid." Sumati was always polite with me, but when it came to revealing personal details he had the caginess of an outsider.

Sumati's ambiguities seemed appropriate to his position among the Mongolian élite. Mongolia has a long history of occupation by foreign powers. Before the Qing dynasty fell, in 1911, the country had been a Chinese protectorate for more than two centuries, and in 1921 it became a satellite of the Soviet Union. In 1990, a democratic movement gathered force as the Soviet advisers withdrew. Since then, Mongolia has been in a remarkable period of transition. Political power has peacefully changed hands twice, and the national elections have not been marred by accusations of fraud. Voter turnout is routinely more than

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LEONG

A group of herdsmen listening to President Bagabandi, who was running for reëlection. One of his slogans was "I grew up in the dust of many horses."

eighty per cent, and the country ranks high in the Freedom House index, which measures a country's pluralism and respect for human rights. Meanwhile, Mongolia's neighbors to the west, the other new Central Asian republics, have slipped into authoritarianism. Western observers often describe Mongolia, which shares a northern border with Russia and a southern border with China, as an island of democracy in a decidedly undemocratic part of the world.

Anthropologists have suggested that Mongolia's receptiveness to democracy derives, in part, from its traditional nomadic way of life, which encourages both individualism and an adaptability to outside forces, particularly the weather. Temperatures in the Gobi Desert, which occupies a third of the country, can rise above a hundred degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and drop below minus-forty degrees in the winter. Mongolia's population is almost 2.7 million—approximately four inhabitants to every square mile. Livestock outnumber people by roughly twelve to one. Some Mongolians have three-digit phone numbers.

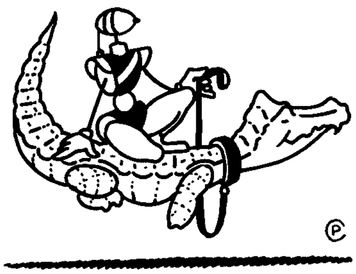
International organizations, prompted by Mongolia's embrace of democracy, have rushed to fill all that empty space. During the nineteen-nineties, the country received nearly two billion dollars in loans and donations from such sources as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, and the Japan International Coöperation Agency. Much of this money was spent on restructuring the Soviet-designed government and financial system, as well as on the development of roads, power stations, and other basic infrastructure. Mongolia hoped eventually to attract foreign investment, especially in the exploitation of the country's impressive natural mineral resources.

Most of the outsiders who came to Mongolia were aid organizations, which sometimes seemed to view the country as a blank slate on which to project their own images. In shifting to a market economy, Mongolia followed the sort of rapid "shock therapy" favored by American economists. Germany's Christian Democratic Party and the Republican Party of the United States have sent political strategists. Japan has been the most generous donor country, largely to encourage Mongolia's democratic progress.

According to Japanese folklore, Mongolia's greatest historical figure, Genghis Khan, was a Japanese warrior who fled to Mongolia in the late thirteenth century. During the Soviet era, Genghis Khan's image was banned; in the new Mongolia, it is everywhere—from labels on beer bottles to the walls of the Ulaanbaatar headquarters of the International Republican Institute, an American group that promotes democracy and free trade. At the institute, I saw a portrait of the world conqueror in a room decorated with stickers that said "McCain" and "I Wish I Lived in New York, So I Could Vote Against Hillary."

Despite the profusion of development programs, there are few signs that Mongolia's transition is leading the country toward self-sufficiency. During the past decade, Mongolia's per-capita foreign aid has been among the highest in the world, and the country has run up a foreign debt of about a billion dollars—a figure that is roughly equivalent to the annual G.D.P. The development programs sometimes lack coördination, and corruption has become a problem. Income gaps have widened. Even as foreign advisers speak of long-term industrial development, the population has moved in the opposite direction. When the old Soviet-era factories were shut down, many city dwellers, who found themselves out of work and with little welfare support, returned to the traditional nomadic life. Although the production of one of Mongolia's most valuable goods—raw cashmere—increased, the domestic processing industry didn't keep pace, and most Mongolian cashmere is now finished overseas.

In 1991, according to a report by the Asian Development Bank, only fifteen per cent of Mongolians fell below the poverty level; now the figure is thirty-six per cent. Each of the past two winters has been marked by a devastating *zud*, a combination of heavy snow and deep freeze, preceded by drought; together, the storms have wiped out a fifth of Mongolia's livestock and driven many of the inexperienced herdsmen back to the cities, where they struggle to find work. The Mongolian Prime Minister, Enkhbayar, told me that the country needs to turn away from nomadism, and yet he also spoke proudly of how the resilient herdsman mentality had contributed to Mongolian democracy.



Sumati never spoke idealistically about Mongolian democracy. When I asked him about the chances of an upset in the election, he said that Mongolia's political climate was too immature and predictable for that. He told me that he had gone into polling largely because he had failed at business during the initial post-Communist period. "I was just looking for some kind of intellectual occupation," he said. A friend introduced him to the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a German pro-democracy organization, which was interested in supporting a Mongolian pollster. Sumati founded Sant Maral in 1994, and the foundation flew him to Germany so that he could see how polling was done in the West. When I asked him what he had gained from this trip, Sumati said, "After I returned home, I produced a report. In ninety days, I had drunk forty-six types of German beer. One thing I found was that when you are travelling on German trains you normally get only one type of beer—Jever. It was quite an interesting report. My favorite beer was the Paulaner weiss bier from Bavaria."

But I sensed that Sumati may not have been quite as cynical as he liked to appear. He is the chairman of the board of directors for the Mongolian chapter of the Soros Foundation, which promotes democracy-building, and his polling work is widely admired. I talked with one of his part-time assistants, a twenty-one-year-old college student who had recently flown out to the remote Khovd Province, where he had rented a motorbike and driven across the mountains, giving questionnaires to the nomads. It had been a rough trip. There weren't any roads. The weather was bad. The young man told me that, when he handed out questionnaires, it wasn't unusual for the nomads to begin weeping.

"Is it because they were afraid?" I asked.

"No," he said. "It's because for the first time they feel that somebody cares about what they think."

According to Sumati's polls, President Bagabandi's lead had dropped to fifty-three per cent by the time he flew into the village of Züünbayan-Ulaan, in central Mongolia. During the past sixteen hours, the temperature had dropped fifty degrees, snow had started to fall, and a hard wind had kicked up. It was mid-May—less than ten days until the election. The wind was a problem for the President, who was campaigning by helicopter. Bagabandi is a former Communist. He has a trim mustache, short black hair, and feline eyes; political cartoonists frequently depict him as a cat. Like many Mongolians, he is the son of nomads. One of his campaign slogans was "I grew up in the dust of many horses."

Züünbayan-Ulaan is nothing more than a small cluster of concrete buildings—a school, a government center, a town hall, some houses—and most of its five thousand four hundred and thirty-one residents live in felt tents, called *gers*, in the surrounding countryside. More than three hundred people stood waiting for Bagabandi in a pasture just north of town. Some of them had arrived on motorcycles, and others had come on horseback; most were dressed in their best *dels*—traditional woollen cloaks. When the helicopter landed, they rushed over the grass, pressing close to the battered Russian Mi-8. The President stepped out, smiling and waving to the crowd.

None of the roads into Züünbayan-Ulaan are paved. There's a grass track that comes in from Arvaykheer, the provincial capital, and that was how I had travelled the day before, along with a translator and a photographer, in a four-wheel-drive Mitsubishi. We had driven southwest from Ulaanbaatar—a trip of eleven hours. On the way, we had passed through half a dozen permanent settlements. Occasionally, I could see a *ger* tucked into the crease of a valley, but mostly the land was empty. There were virtually no trees; huge hawks and kites perched heavily on the grass. Sometimes my driver had to honk to get them off the road. In the vast landscape, with its endless backdrop of green mountains, the only changing element was the weather. It rushed past us in waves, as if the sun and the wind and the rain were trying to fill all that emptiness.

W. G. Hamilton

"They won't even try their palate cleansers!"

• •

Bagabandi was campaigning on the need for stability. In the town hall, he gave a speech in which he promised to work for the kind of non-partisan government that would find favor with the big international donors, who had recently pledged twenty-five million dollars in emergency *zud* relief. The town hall had plywood walls and an old wooden floor that had been painted red. Bare electric bulbs hung from the ceiling. More than four hundred people listened intently. Near the end of his speech, Bagabandi said, "Next week in Paris, there will be a meeting of donor countries, and the international community will give us assistance. I will continue to promote an open foreign policy. Meanwhile, your job is to tend your livestock and recover from the effects of the winter."

Bagabandi's Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party is an old party with a new face. It ran the country during the Soviet era, and it converted livestock into state-owned property, organized the nomads into rural collectives, and engaged in a brutal crackdown on Buddhism and in political purges that killed many thousands. The Soviets also invested heavily in social services and significantly raised the average Mongolian's standard of living. In the seven decades of Soviet rule, the country's population tripled, the average life expectancy doubled, and the rate of literacy soared to almost a hundred per cent.

After the collapse of Soviet rule, the M.P.R.P. changed course. At the urging of the I.M.F., the World Bank, and other international organizations, it dismantled state industries, lowered trade barriers, disbanded the livestock collectives, and redistributed the animals to the nomads. In the 1996 parliamentary elections, several opposition parties, coached by the International Republican Institute, formed the Democratic Coalition, and campaigned on a Contract with Mongolia, inspired by Newt Gingrich's Contract with America. The coalition won a majority and gained control of the government. (Mongolia is a parliamentary democracy, similar to the French model, in which the President has much less power than in the American system.) The coalition accelerated the shock-therapy transition, and its members bickered among themselves, appointing four Prime Ministers in four years. In 1998, the coalition's most charismatic leader, Zorig, was stabbed to death; the crime remains unsolved, and most Mongolians believe that it was politically motivated. In last year's parliamentary elections, the M.P.R.P. promised to increase social-support programs, and it was swept back into power.

After Bagabandi finished speaking, he opened the town meeting to questions. An old man in a fur cap stepped up to a microphone. "My talk will be mixed with criticism and suggestions," he began. "I wish you success on the campaign. But I want to tell you that last year was very hard for us, and over the past two years the size of our herds has decreased dramatically. How can we live now? Some herdsmen are saying we shouldn't have animals, because this life is no longer appropriate for us. People are giving up."

He said that his pension of fifteen dollars a month wasn't adequate, and that he had had problems with theft. The President tried to answer, but the old man wouldn't stop. He complained that political power in the new Mongolia changed hands too frequently, and he criticized smear campaigning. The crowd was so attentive that I could hear the flakes of snow tapping against the windows.

During my time in Mongolia, I attended more than half a dozen of these town meetings, and it was always the silence that impressed me the most. Sometimes the meetings dragged on for three or four hours, but still the people listened. Herdsmen rely heavily on shortwave radio for the limited information they receive, and foreign-aid workers told me that the Mongolians have a remarkable capacity for retaining what they hear. "But the Mongolians are also not particularly experienced in analyzing the quality of the information," a British woman who had distributed information about health care told me. "They're a little vulnerable."

There wasn't any sign of fear among the herdsmen, who often challenged the candidates, sometimes aggressively. I attended one meeting at which a man openly accused the Democratic candidate of being a liar. Usually, though, the people were respectful, and there was a purity and an intimacy to these exchanges—a politician and a group of voters meeting in the middle of nowhere.

In Züünbayan-Ulaan, Bagabandi and his ministers answered the old man's questions carefully. The President gave the statistics for nationwide *zud* losses, and said that he was working to get more assistance to this region. Then he passed the mike to the local member of parliament, who talked about problems with crime. The old herdsman stood up again and interrupted him twice. After that, the mike went to the Minister of Nature and Environment, who talked about the need to reduce the national debt, and then he passed the mike to the provincial governor, who gave details on World Bank loans that would provide *zud* assistance.

After the President headed off to the helicopter, the old man was one of the last to leave the hall. I stopped him outside. He was seventy-seven, and his name was Legtseg. The decades of cold had left a red web of tiny capillaries on his face. He smiled and answered my questions eagerly. Legtseg was not a member of any political party, and last winter he had lost eight of his seventeen cows and sheep. He said that he didn't know anything about the World Bank. I asked him if the politicians' answers had satisfied him.

"No," he said. "They didn't answer straight on. I will vote for Gonchigdorj, because I support the Democrats and I support democracy. We have been under the influence of our two neighbors for many years, but now we are open to the rest of the world, so I believe that democracy is the only path for Mongolia."

A month earlier, I had travelled with Gonchigdorj on a whistle-stop train trip to the Siberian border. We stopped in Partizan, Batsumber, Tünkhel—tiny settlements of a few

FOR SALE BY OWNER
LORENZ

"Frankly, since my wife left me it's more than I can keep up with."

HERE RESTS

my sister Josephine,
born july in '29
and dead these 15 years,
who carried a book
on every stroll.

when daddy was dying
she left the streets
and moved back home
to tend him.

her pimp came too,
her Diamond Dick,
and they would take turns
reading
the bible aloud through the house.
when you poem this,
and you will, she would say,
remember the Book of Job.

happy birthday and hope
to you Josephine,
one of the east's
most wanted.

may heaven be filled
with literate men,
may they bed you
with respect.

—*Lucille Clifton*

hundred people. At each town, the train paused for fifteen minutes while Gonchigdorj took a ceremonial sip from a bowl of milk, sprinkled a few drops in the air in honor of the local spirits, and gave a brief speech. Along the way, his assistants distributed calendars featuring Genghis Khan in a pensive pose beneath the inscription "Democratic Mongolia."

Gonchigdorj is a former math professor who first made his mark in politics as a leader of the 1990 pro-democracy movement. He is forty-seven years old, and has a round face, slick black hair, and a reputation for opportunism. I met him in his private carriage on the way north; he was resting between stops, sipping tea while the scenery slipped past. "The ruling party is against privatization," he told me. "The reason is that during the Communist regime we couldn't even talk about that issue, and the M.P.R.P. still believes that the state should own everything. It's softening, of course, but it's still there."

It seemed that Gonchigdorj was creating something of a nonissue—after all, the M.P.R.P. had presided over the initial stages of Mongolia's privatization. But Gonchigdorj's former party, the Social Democrats, had been part of the coalition government in 1996, and they were still coping with the backlash that had cost them the 2000 parliamentary election. Gonchigdorj was in trouble. He was running on the theme of balancing the M.P.R.P.'s majority in parliament with a Democratic president, but his message wasn't coming across as strongly as Bagabandi's plea for one-party domination, as expressed in the slogan "If the government is stable, the people will be peaceful." Before the start of the campaign, Sumati's poll had indicated that only thirty-seven per cent of the voters supported Gonchigdorj.

The train trip did not go well. The crowds were small and unfriendly, and the northward swing ended at Altanbulag, a town on the Russian border whose residents seemed more involved with the movement of strange goods across the border than with the drama of the election. I saw a cluster of ethnic Buryat women packing spools of thread into empty laptop-computer cases, which they then transported into Russia. Nobody could explain this activity to me. At the border station, a sad-faced young man was trying to use a bicycle pump to inflate the left front tire of a red Lada. He paused when Gonchigdorj came through, and when the politician left he started pumping again.

I began to wonder what the average Mongolian actually felt about democracy. Sumati's polls had shown that, nationwide, eighty-seven per cent thought the 1990 shift to democracy was the right step for the country, and fifty-two per cent had expressed satisfaction with the present political system. But among older Mongolians there was still a strong sentimentality for the Soviet past, when incomes were secure and the old M.P.R.P. made all the decisions. At rallies, I met many people who seemed disillusioned with their country's changes. "Since democracy came, people have just become poorer," one woman told me at an M.P.R.P. rally in Zuunmod, south of Ulaanbaatar. "I think if there's just one party ruling it will be better." She was fifty-two years old, trying to survive with a herd of eight cows, and she struck me as a paradoxical creation of the post-Communist world—someone who longed for the clarity of old authoritarianism while relishing her new freedom of speech. She said that last spring she had become so fed up with the coalition government that she had organized a protest of a hundred and eight herdsmen. They had tried to ride fifty miles to the national parliament building but had been stopped by the police before they reached the center of Ulaanbaatar. Still, she was enormously pleased that the newspapers had reported the protest.

During my last meeting with Sumati before the election, he remarked that there were indeed authoritarian elements in Mongolian politics, especially in Bagabandi's camp. "He'll be quite quiet until after May 20th," Sumati said. "And then he will create some problems. He'll try to show some principles, but I'm afraid that those principles are not democratic principles. They are authoritarian principles."

Sumati grinned. He seemed to delight in pointing out the frailties of the Mongolian system; earlier he had told me about a mudslinging campaign that was going on between the M.P.R.P. and the Democratic Party. The Democrats had accused Bagabandi of accepting a million dollars in bribes from the Chinese; meanwhile, there were insinuations that Gonchigdorj and other former coalition leaders had hindered the investigation into Zorig's murder, and there was talk of a scandal from Gonchigdorj's days as a math professor, during which he had allegedly helped a Mongolian youth team cheat at an international math competition. This insinuation seemed to give Sumati particular pleasure, possibly because his wife is a mathematician who once worked with Gonchigdorj at the Academy of Sciences. "It was quite a nice place until Gonchigdorj arrived," Sumati had once told me, with a smile.

That was his characteristic pose—the detached acuity of someone who is both an insider and an outsider—and it occurred to me that it was one of the traits that made him so good at what he did. He was dressed as he had been when I'd last seen him: gray Umbro sweatshirt and faded jeans. He was sitting beneath one of the Democratic Party campaign posters of Genghis Khan—a new addition to his office—and I asked him why he had put it up.

"I don't know why they think Genghis Khan was a Democrat," he said. When I asked whether he supported the Democrats, he shook his head and said that the only candidate who impressed him was Dashnyam, a political unknown who had become something like the Ralph Nader of Mongolian politics. By Sumati's estimate, Dashnyam currently had seven-per-cent support in Ulaanbaatar. "I'll vote for somebody who is in opposition to the M.P.R.P., even though he doesn't have a chance," Sumati said. "Just for my own pleasure, maybe."

I talked with other highly educated Mongolians who shared Sumati's apparent indifference to the outcome of the election. Some of them felt that, regardless of who won, the country's fortunes were largely in the hands of the three most influential foreign donors—the I.M.F., the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. The two major candidates had campaigned heavily on the need for continued assistance from those organizations, and nobody had openly challenged this assumption, despite the hardships caused by the shift from a state-subsidized to a free-market economy. Representatives of the World Bank and the I.M.F. told me that a period of economic pain was an inevitable part of the process, and they assured me that the essential pillars for sustained development were now in place. Even so, in the past two years there has been a slight increase in foreign aid, and none of the major donors has established a clear timetable for ending their support. At times, I had the disquieting thought that Mongolia had simply traded one form of dependence for another.

I also met a prominent businessman in Ulaanbaatar named Enkhbat, who feared that Mongolia's dependence on Western aid was undermining the initiatives toward democracy and an open economy on which that aid was based. Five years ago, Enkhbat, a handsome man in his early forties, founded Datacom, the company that brought the Internet to Mongolia. Datacom now has approximately a hundred employees, and it is currently working on a pilot project to develop software for an American company. Whenever Enkhbat mentioned the international organizations, he spat out their names angrily. "The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have now been working for ten years in Mongolia," he said. "They never have regular meetings with the private sector. It's just our bureaucrats and the Western bureaucrats working together. They love each other, and they work very well together, because they don't need any new ideas."

When I mentioned Enkhbat's criticisms to Robin Mearns, a World Bank official, he said, "I can understand why he might have had that view until the mid-nineties. Until that point, the World Bank's focus was on stabilizing the country's finances." He added that since then the bank had offered a credit program designed to fund new business ventures, and put a lot of effort into the alleviation of poverty.

Still, Enkhbat believed that the international organizations had not done enough to capitalize on Mongolia's greatest resource for development: the country's high literacy rate. (Since 1990, it has dropped to something under ninety per cent.) Moreover, he noted that many people in Ulaanbaatar speak foreign languages, a legacy of the large number of Mongolians who studied abroad during the Soviet period. Enkhbat felt that Mongolia should be establishing technological parks and high-tech export-processing zones, rather than focussing so much on infrastructure. "And why does our government always ask for money for power-plant development?" he said. "Because many corrupt officials will have an opportunity to make money off it."

Four days before the election, Bagabandi's party scored a major success when the international organizations made a one-year pledge of three hundred and thirty million dollars in assistance. M.P.R.P. officials appeared on television to announce the donations, and they noted that, having received the support of the international community, they also hoped to enjoy the support of the Mongolians.

On Election Day, there was a high blue sky and almost no wind; the sun glanced bright off the *gers*. I was heading south with Chinzorig, my translator, in his 1992 Toyota Carina, looking for Voting Station No. 69. After an hour, the paved road gave way to a grass track. There were few people living here, but there was a lot of traffic, because one of the country's most important Buddhist shrines was ahead of us. We passed Mitsubishi jeeps, Toyota coupes, and old Lada sedans. We saw two yellow cabs parked in the middle of a pasture, where their occupants were having a picnic.

We kept going. Hawks floated beneath thin wisps of cirrus cloud; there was nothing else in sight but grass and sky. After a while, Chinzorig turned off the track, and we climbed a hill. We crested a ridge and saw a Mongolian flag flapping outside the voting station, which had been set up in a *ger*.

Inside the station were two tables, a ballot box, and a red screen that afforded privacy to voters. There were six people at the tables. They were observers, representing all three parties. The main official, Shinbatar, was also the headmaster of the local secondary school. He was twenty-nine years old, and he spoke Mongolian, Russian, Tibetan, and some English. He showed me the registration list for the district, which covered sixty square miles with a population of two hundred and forty-five people, of whom exactly a hundred had already voted. Shinbatar was an M.P.R.P. member. He told me proudly that Mongolia was following the American system of democracy.

"We're learning how to do it," he said. "We've made a step forward, but it's not enough. America is a powerful country, while here in Mongolia we have nomads spread everywhere. We should unite together and build more cities."

We waited for nearly two hours before a voter appeared. Finally, two men materialized on an old Soviet Planeta 5 motorcycle; they were sweating, and said that they had been travelling for half an hour.

After they voted, by circling a name on the ballot, an official marked the index finger of their left hands with a blot of indelible ink. It was hard to keep track of the herdsmen, and Mongolia had started using the system last year, to make sure people didn't vote again at another station. This year's blots were small; last year, excessive enthusiasm for the new system had led to a liberal use of ink, and for a week it looked as if 82.42 per cent of the Mongolian adult population had smashed their fingers with a hammer.

One of the men told me that he had voted for Bagabandi. He was twenty-six years old, and he said that he had lost thirty animals last winter; he had ten left. He wasn't sure how he'd make it through the next year. When I asked him why he'd voted for Bagabandi, he said that his parents had asked him to. He smiled and shook my hand, and then he headed off, with his friend on the back of the bike.

Three days after the election, I had dinner with Sumati at the Café de France, an expat hangout in Ulaanbaatar. Bagabandi had won, with 58.13 per cent of the vote. In the course of the campaign, he had gained .13 percentage points over the total predicted in Sumati's initial poll, in March. Voter turnout had been eighty-three per cent. An estimated million dollars had been spent on the campaigns.

"If you look at how much money was spent and how much mud was thrown in both directions, it must be frustrating for our politicians," Sumati said, with a smile, as he sipped his Genghis beer.

For the first time, Sumati talked in detail about his background. His Mongolian grandfather had been an official in the pre-Communist government, and after the revolution he had been arrested on the trumped-up charge that he was a Japanese spy. Sumati's father, who was five at the time, accompanied his father to prison, because children were allowed to come and go in order to get food. When he grew older, he became a hardline Communist and a director of the Mongolian Institute of Languages. As an old man in the nineteen-eighties, Sumati's father had organized a Party election with opposition candidates, without the permission of his superiors; he was eventually purged from the Party. In self-imposed exile, he went to Moscow, where he worked on a Mongolian-Russian dictionary, which he never completed. He had left Ulaanbaatar in 1990, before the democratic movement gained power. He died in 1997.

"He was gone for all these changes," Sumati said. "And, despite being thrown out of the Communist Party, he still believed in its ideas." He went on, "Just the other day, I talked with a friend who had been at the academy with me. He remembered that a K.G.B. agent had talked to him about me. The agent said, 'This guy Sumati has no chance of success, because he is under special surveillance.'"

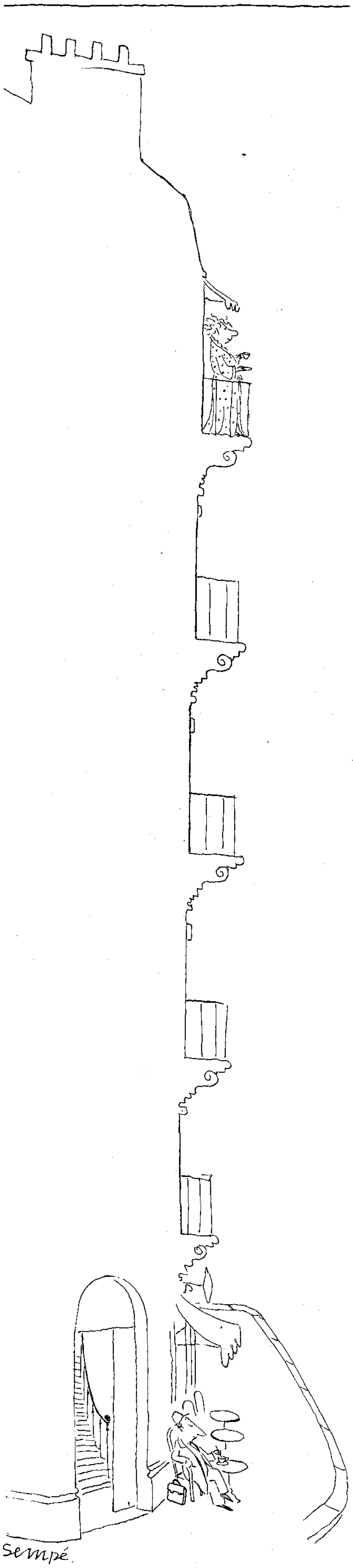
It was one of those stories, heard often in post-authoritarian countries, that move quickly in the telling. Suddenly, I understood where all those layers of cynicism had come from, and I sensed that Sumati was finally going to express his gratitude for democracy.

"That's why I really enjoy this time," he said. "I do what I like, and I don't care what these stupid assholes say. Some of the people who used to denounce me even became leaders of the democratic movement. I know for certain that at least two of them became leaders of the Democratic Party. I will never become a member of any political party."

He took another drink of his beer, and I glanced at his left index finger. It was clean.

"Did you vote?" I asked.

He put the beer down and then, sounding like the millions of Americans who had decided to stay home on Election Day last November, he said, "At the start, I thought I would vote for Gonchigdorj. But then I thought, I know how this election will end, so why should I vote? It's a waste of my time." ♦



FICTION

SUMMER OF SOLANKA

BY SALMAN RUSHDIE

NINA BERMAN/AURORA

Professor Malik Solanka, retired, irascible historian of ideas, and since his recent fifty-fifth birthday celibate and solitary by his own (much criticized) choice, in his silvered years found himself living in a golden age. Outside his window a long, humid summer, the first hot season of the third millennium, baked and perspired. The city boiled with money. Rents and property values had never been higher, and in the garment industry it was widely held that fashion had never been so fashionable. New restaurants opened every hour. Stores, dealerships, galleries struggled to satisfy the skyrocketing demand for ever more recherché produce: limited-edition olive oils, three-hundred-dollar corkscrews, customized Humvees, the latest anti-virus software, escort services featuring contortionists and twins, featherlight shawls made from the chin fluff of extinct mountain goats. In spite of the recent falls in the value of the Nasdaq index and the value of Amazon stock, the new technology had the city by the ears: the talk was still of start-ups, I.P.O.s, interactivity, the unimaginable future that had just begun to begin. The future was a casino, and everyone was gambling, and everyone expected to win.

On Professor Solanka's street, well-heeled white youths lounged in baggy garments on roseate stoops, stylishly simulating indigence while they waited for the billionairedom that would surely be along sometime soon. There was a tall, green-eyed young woman with steeply slanting Central European cheekbones who particularly caught his sexually abstinent but still roving eye. Her spiky strawberry-blond hair stuck out clown fashion from under a black D'Angelo "Voodoo" baseball cap, her lips were full and sardonic, and she giggled rudely behind a perfunctory palm as Old World, dandyish, cane-twirling little Solly Solanka, in straw Panama hat and cream linen suit, went by on his afternoon walk. "Solly," the college identity he'd never cared for but had not entirely managed to lose.

"Hey, sir? Sir, excuse me?" The blonde was calling out to him, in imperious tones that insisted on a reply. Her satraps became watchful, like a Praetorian Guard. She was breaking a rule of big-city life, breaking it brazenly, sure of her power, confident of her turf and posse, fearing nothing. This was just pretty-girl chutzpah; no big deal. Professor Solanka paused and turned to face the lounging goddess of the threshold, who proceeded, unnervingly, to interview him. "You walk a lot. I mean, five or six times a day I see you walking someplace. I'm sitting here, I see you come, I see you go, but there's no dog, and it's not like you come back with lady friends or groceries. Also, the hours are strange—it can't be that you're going to a job. So I'm asking myself, Why is he always out walking alone? I got the impression you were looking for something, and it crossed my mind to ask you what that might be. Just being friendly, sir, just being neighborly. You're kind of a mystery. To me, anyhow."

Sudden anger rose in him. "What I'm looking for," he barked, "is to be left in peace." His voice trembled with a rage far bigger than her intrusion merited, a rage that shocked him whenever it coursed through his nervous system, like a flood. Hearing his vehemence, the young woman recoiled, retreating into silence.

Luckily, she wasn't there anymore; no one was when he returned from the Caribbean carnival, damp-hatted and soaked through after being caught unprepared by a squall of hard, hot rain. On nearby Amsterdam Avenue there was a summer block party, a street market, doing good business in spite of the showers. Professor Solanka surmised that, in the greater part of the planet, the goods piled high on these cut-price barrows would have filled the shelves and display cabinets of the most exclusive little boutiques and upper-echelon department stores. In all of India, China, Africa, and much of South America, those who had the leisure and wallet for fashion—or more simply, in the poorer latitudes, for the mere acquisition of things—would have killed for the street merchandise of Manhattan. America insulted the rest of the planet, thought Malik Solanka in his old-fashioned way, by treating such bounty with the shoulder-shrugging casualness of the inequitably wealthy. But New York in this time of plenty had become the object and goal of the world's concupiscence and lust, and the "insult" only made the rest of the planet more desirous than ever.

The season's hit movie portrayed the decadence of Caesar Joaquin Phoenix's imperial Rome, in which honor and dignity, not to mention life-and-death actions and distractions, were to be found only in the computer-regenerated illusion of the great gladiatorial arena, the Flavian Amphitheatre or Colosseum. In New York, too, there were circuses as well as bread: a musical about lovable lions, Springsteen at the Garden with a song about the forty-one police gunshots that killed innocent Amadou Diallo, Hillary vs. Rudy, a cardinal's funeral, a movie about lovable dinosaurs, the motorcades of two largely interchangeable and certainly unlovable Presidential candidates (Gush, Bore), Hillary vs. Rick, a cardinal's inauguration, a cartoon about lovable British chickens, and even a literary festival; plus a series of "exuberant" parades celebrating the city's many ethnic, national, and sexual subcultures and ending (sometimes) in knifings and assaults on (usually) women. On parade days, Professor Solanka, who thought of himself as egalitarian by nature, and as a born-and-bred metropolitan of the countryside-is-for-cows persuasion, strolled sweatily cheek by jowl among his fellow-citizens. One Sunday he rubbed shoulders with slim-hipped gay-pride prancers; another weekend he got jiggy beside a big-assed Puerto Rican girl wearing her national flag as a bra. He didn't feel intruded upon amid these multitudes; to the contrary. There was a satisfying anonymity in the crowds, an absence of intrusion. Nobody here was interested in his mysteries. Everyone was here to lose himself. Such was the unarticulated magic of the masses, and, these days, losing himself was just about Professor Solanka's only purpose in life. This particular rainy weekend, there was a calypso beat in the air, not the mere Harry Belafonte Jamaica farewells and jackass songs of Solanka's somewhat guiltily fond memory ("Now I tell you in a positive way / don' tie me donkey down dere / 'cause me donkey will rump and play / don' tie me donkey down dere!"), but the true, satirical music of the Jamaican troubadour-polemicists—Banana Bird, Cool Runnings, Yellowbelly—live in Bryant Park and on shoulder-high boom boxes up and down Broadway.

The phone was ringing as he came through his front door, the rain still dripping off his hat brim. He answered it snappishly, snatching off its base the cordless unit in the apartment's entrance hall. "Yes, what, please?" His wife's voice arrived in his ear via a cable on the Atlantic bed, or maybe in these days, when everything was changing, it was a satellite high above the ocean; he couldn't be sure. These days, when the age of pulse was giving way to the age of tone, when the epoch of analog (which was to say also of the richness of language, of analogy) was giving way to the digital era, the final victory of the numerate over the literate. He had always loved her voice. Fifteen years ago in London, he had telephoned Morgen Franz, a publishing friend who by chance was away from his desk, and Eleanor Masters, passing by, had picked up the clamoring instrument; they had never met, but they ended up talking for an hour. A week later they dined at her place, neither of them alluding to the inappropriateness of so intimate a venue for a first date. A decade and a half of togetherness ensued. So he fell in love with her voice before falling in love with the rest of her. This had always been their favorite story about each other; now, of course, in love's brutal aftermath, when memory was reinvented as pain, when voices on the phone were all they had left, it had become one of the saddest. Professor Solanka listened to the sour of Eleanor's voice, and with some distaste imagined its being broken into little parcels of digitized information, her low, lovely voice first consumed and then regurgitated by a mainframe computer probably located in someplace like Hyderabad-Deccan. What is the digital equivalent of lovely? he wondered. What are the digits that encode beauty, number-fingers that enclose, transform, transmit, decode, and somehow, in the process, fail to trap or choke the soul of it? Not because of the technology but in spite of it, beauty, that ghost, that treasure, passes undiminished through the new machines.

"Malik. *Solly*." (This, to annoy him.) "You're not listening. You've gone off inside your head on one of your riffs, and the plain fact that your son is ill hasn't even registered. The plain fact that I have to wake up every morning and listen to him asking—unbearably asking—why his father isn't home hasn't registered. Not to mention the plainest fact of all—namely, that without a shred of a reason or a scrap of credible explanation you walked out on us, you went off across an ocean and betrayed all those who need and love you most, who still do, damn you, in spite of everything." It was only a cough, the boy didn't have anything life-threatening, but she was right; Professor Solanka had withdrawn into himself. In this small telephonic matter, as in the greater business of their life once together and now apart, their marriage once considered indissoluble, the best partnership any of their friends had ever witnessed; and of their joint parenthood of Asmaan Solanka, now an improbably beautiful and gentle-natured three-year-old, the miraculously yellow-haired product of dark-haired parents, whom they had named so celestially (*Asmaan*, n., m., *lit.* the sky, but also *fig.* paradise) because he was the only heaven in which they could both wholeheartedly and unreservedly believe.

Professor Solanka apologized to his wife for his distractedness, whereupon she wept, a loud honking noise that squeezed at his heart, for he was by no means a heartless man. He waited silently for her to stop. When she did, he spoke in his most mandarin manner, denying himself—denying her—the slightest hint of emotion. "I accept that what I have done must feel inexplicable to you. I am remembering, however, what you yourself taught me about the importance of the inexplicable"—here she hung up on him, but he finished the sentence anyway—"in, ah, Shakespeare." Which unheard conclusion conjured up the vision of his wife in the nude, of Eleanor Masters fifteen years ago in her long-haired, twenty-five-year-old glory, lying naked with her head in his lap and a battered "Complete Works," bound in blue leather, face down across her bush. Such had been the indecorous but sweetly swift conclusion of that first dinner. He had brought the wine, three expensive bottles of Antinori Tignanello (Three! Evidence of a seducer's excessiveness there), while she had roasted a lamb shank for him and also served, to accompany the cumin-scented meat, a salad of fresh flowers. She wore a short black dress and walked lightly, and barefoot, through a flat much influenced by Bloomsbury Group design and craftwork, and boasting a caged parrot that imitated her laugh: a big laugh for so delicate a woman. His first and last blind date, she turned out to be fully the equal of her voice; not only beautiful but smart, somehow both confident and vulnerable, and a great cook. After eating many nasturtiums and drinking copiously of his Tuscan red, she began to explain her doctoral thesis (they were sitting on the floor of her living room by now, lounging on a handmade rug woven by Cressida Bell), but kisses interrupted her, for Professor Solanka had fallen tenderly, like a lamb, in love. They would happily argue, during their long good years, about which of them had made the first move, she always hotly (but with bright eyes) denying that she could ever have been so forward, he insisting, while knowing it to be untrue, that she had "thrown herself at him."

"Do you want to hear this stuff or not?" Yes, he'd nodded, his hand caressing one small, finely wrought breast. She put her hand over his and launched into her argument. Her proposition was that at the heart of each of the great tragedies were unanswerable questions about love, and that, to make sense of the plays, we must each attempt to explicate these inexplicables in our own way. Why did Hamlet, loving his dead father, interminably delay his revenge while, loved by Ophelia, he destroyed her instead? Why did Lear, loving Cordelia best of his daughters, fail to hear the love in her opening-scene honesty and so fall prey to her sisters' unlovingness? And why was Macbeth, a man's man who loved his king and country, so easily led by the erotic but loveless Lady M. toward an evil throne of blood? Professor Solanka in New York, still absently holding the cordless telephone in his hand, recalled with awe naked Eleanor's erect nipple beneath his moving fingers; also her extraordinary answer to the problem of Othello, which for her was not the "motiveless malignity" of Iago but, rather, the Moor's lack of emotional intelligence. "Othello's incredible stupidity about love, the moronic scale of the jealousy that leads him to murder his allegedly beloved wife on the flimsiest of evidence." This was Eleanor's solution: "Othello doesn't love Desdemona. The idea just popped into my head one day. A real light-bulb moment for me. He says he does, but it can't be true. Because if he loves her, the murder makes no sense. For me, Desdemona is Othello's trophy wife, his most valuable and status-giving possession, the physical proof of his risen standing in a white man's world. You see? He loves that about her, but not her. Othello himself, obviously, is not a black man but a 'Moor': an Arab, a Muslim, his name probably a Latinization of the Arabic Attallah or Ataullah. So he's not a creature of the Christian world of sin and redemption but, rather, of the Islamic moral universe, whose polarities are honor and shame. Desdemona's death is an 'honor killing.' She didn't have to be guilty; the accusation was enough. The attack on her virtue was incompatible with Othello's honor. She's not even a person to him. He has reified her. She's his Oscar-Barbie statuette. His doll. At least that's what I argued, and they gave me the doctorate, perhaps just as a prize for brazenness, for my sheer gall." She took a big gulp of the Tignanello, then arched her back and put both arms around his neck and pulled him down to her. Tragedy vanished from their thoughts.

These many years later, Professor Solanka stood under a hot shower, warming himself after his soaked ramble with the calypso revellers and feeling like a pompous dope. To quote Eleanor's thesis against her was a cruelty he might easily have spared her. What was he thinking of, giving himself and his paltry actions these high Shakespearean airs? Did he truly dare to set himself beside the Moor of Venice and King Lear, to liken his humble mysteries to theirs? Such vanity was surely a more than adequate ground for divorce. He should call her back and tell her that, by way of apology. But that, too, would strike the wrong note. Eleanor didn't want a divorce. Even now, she wanted him back. "You know perfectly well," she had told him more than once, "that if you decided to give this up, this stupidity of yours, everything would be fine. It would be so fine. I can't bear it that you won't."

And this was the wife he had left! If she had a failing, it was that she didn't give blow jobs. (His own eccentricity was that he hated having the top of his head touched during the act of love.) If she had a failing, it was that she had so acute a sense of smell that she made him feel as if he stank the place up. (As a result, however, he had begun to wash more often.) If she had a failing, it was that she bought things without ever asking what they cost, an astonishing trait in a woman who did not, as the British say, come from money. If she had a failing, it was that she had grown accustomed to being kept, and could spend more money on Christmas than half the population earned in a year. If she had a failing, it was that her mother love blinded her to the rest of humanity's desires, including, to be blunt, Professor Solanka's. If she had a failing, it was that she wanted more children. That she wanted nothing else. Not all the gold of Araby.

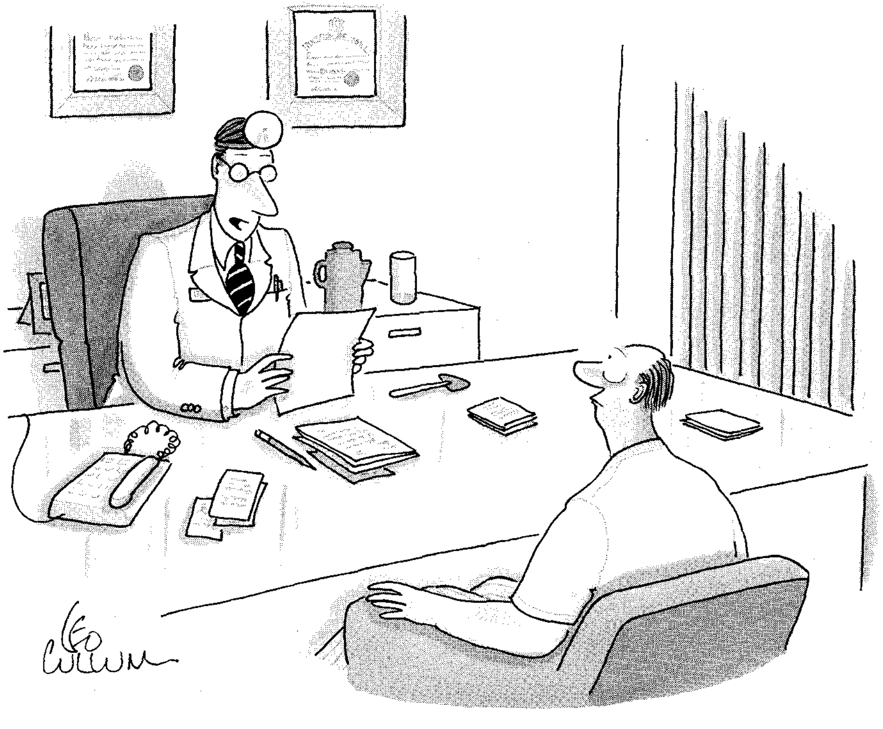
No, she was faultless: the tenderest, most attentive of lovers, the most extraordinary mother, charismatic and imaginative, the easiest and most rewarding of companions, not a big talker but a good one, and a connoisseur not just of food and drink but of human character, too. To be smiled on by Eleanor Masters Solanka was to feel subtly, pleasingly complimented.

In his comfortable Upper West Side sublet, a handsome, first- and second-floor duplex boasting majestic oak panelling, high ceilings, and a library that spoke well of the owners, Professor Malik Solanka nursed a glass of red Geyserville zinfandel and mourned. The decision to leave had been wholly his; still, he grieved for his old life. Whatever Eleanor had said on the phone, the break was almost certainly irreparable. Solanka had never thought of himself as a bolter or a quitter, yet he had shed more skins than a snake. Country, family, and not one wife but two had been left in his wake. Also, now, a child. Maybe the mistake was to see his latest exit as unusual. The harsh reality, perhaps, was that he was acting not against nature but according to its dictates. When he stood naked before the unvarnished mirror of truth, this was what he was really like.

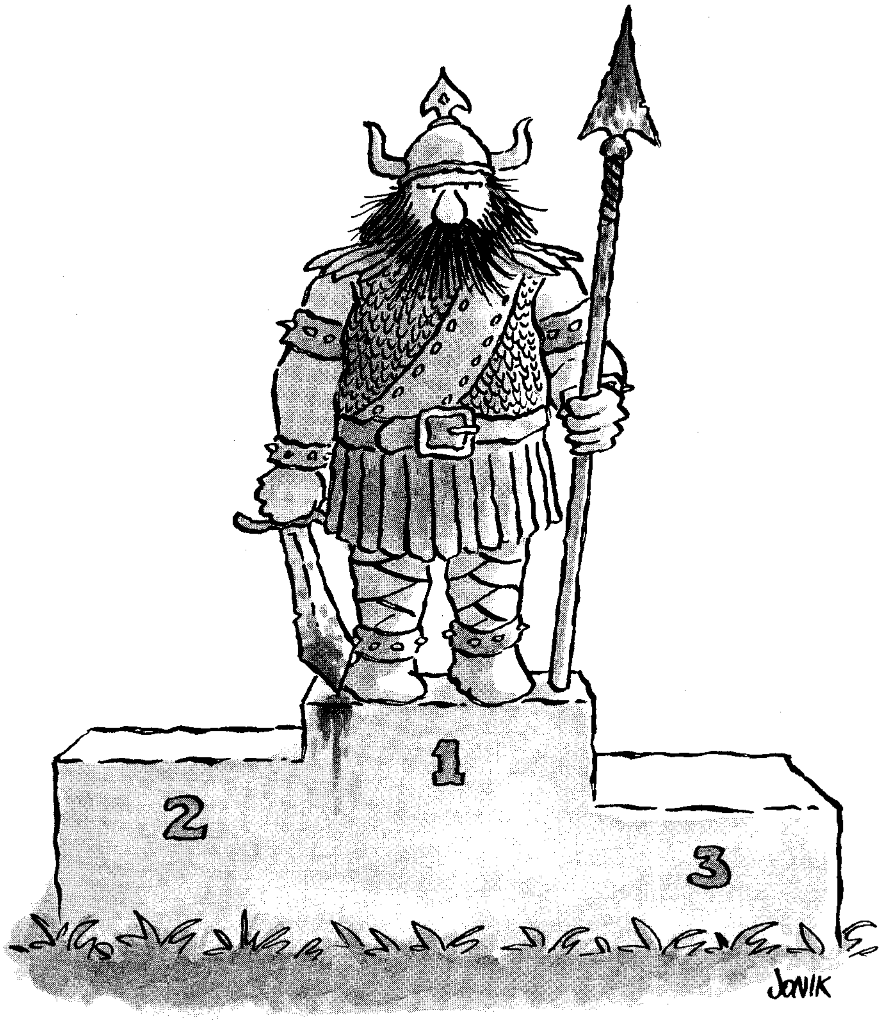
Yet he believed himself to be a good person. Women believed it, too. Sensing in him a ferocity of commitment that was rarely found in modern men, women had often allowed themselves to fall in love with him, surprising themselves—these wised-up, cautious women!—by the speed with which they charged outward into the really deep emotional water. And he didn't let them down. He was kind, understanding, generous, clever, funny, grown-up, and the sex was good, it was always good. This is forever, they thought, because they could see him thinking it, too; they felt loved, treasured, safe. He told them—each of his women, in turn—that friendship was what he had instead of family ties, and, more than friendship, love. That sounded right. So they dropped their defenses and relaxed into all the good stuff, and never saw the hidden twisting in him, the dreadful torque of his doubt, until the day he snapped and the alien burst out of his stomach, baring multiple rows of teeth. They never saw the end coming until it hit them. His first wife, Sara, put it thus: "It felt like an axe murder."

Her name was Lear, Sara Jane Lear, some sort of distant relative of the writer and watercolorist, but there wasn't a trace of antic Edward's immortal nonsense in her. *How pleasant to know Sara Lear, who remembers such volumes of stuff! Some folks think her awfully queer, but I find her pleasant enough.* The revised verse didn't raise the ghost of a smile. "Imagine how many times people have recited those exact words to me and you'll excuse me for not being impressed," she'd said. She was a year or so his senior and was writing a thesis on Joyce and the French *nouveau roman*. In her second-floor flat on Chesterton Road, "love"—which in retrospect looked more like fear, a mutual clutching at the life belt of the other while drowning in twenty-something loneliness—made him plow his way twice through "Finnegans Wake." Also the dour pages of Sarraute, Robbe-Grillet, and Butor. When he looked up miserably from the great heaps of their slow, obscure sentences, he found her watching him from the other armchair, turning in his direction that angular devil-mask of a face, beautiful but sly. Sly-eyed lady of the Fenlands. He couldn't read her expression. It might have been contempt.

They married too quickly for thought and felt trapped by the mistake almost immediately. Yet they stayed together



"It appears that you'll definitely outlive your usefulness."



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for several miserable years. Afterward, when he told the story of his life to Eleanor Masters, Solanka cast his first wife as the one with the exit strategies, the player most likely to resign the game: "She gave up early on everything she desired most. Before she found out she wasn't up to it." Sara had been the outstanding university actress of her generation but had left it there, forever leaving behind the greasepaint and the crowd without a word of regret. Later, she would also abandon her thesis and get a job in advertising, emerging from the chrysalis of her bluestocking wardrobe and spreading gorgeous butterfly wings.

This was soon after their marriage ended. When Solanka found out about it, he was briefly furious. All that effortful reading for nothing! And not only reading. "Thanks to her," he raged at Eleanor, "I saw 'L'Année Dernière à Marienbad' three times in one day. We spent a whole weekend working out that damn matchstick game they play: 'I suggest another game, one I always win.' 'It's not a game if you can't lose.' 'Oh, I can lose, but I never do.' That game. Thanks to her, it's still stuck in my head, but she's buggered off to the universe of if you've got it flaunt it. I'm stuck here in the blasted couloirs of French fiction, and she's in a Jil Sander power suit in a forty-ninth-floor corner office on Sixth Avenue, pulling down, I have no doubt, some major bucks."

"Yes, but for the record, *you* dumped *her*," Eleanor pointed out. "You found the next one and traded Sara in: left her cold and flat. You should never have married her, obviously, which is your only excuse. That's the great unanswerable question about love posed by your Sara Lear: What on earth were you thinking of? Also, you got yours when the next one, the Wagnerian Valkyrie with the Harley, threw you over for—which composer was it?" She knew the answer perfectly well, but it was a story they both enjoyed. "Fucking Rummenigge." Solanka grinned, calming down. "She worked as an assistant on one of his three-orchestras-and-a-Sherman-tank efforts, and afterward he sent her a telegram: 'Kindly refrain from all sexual intercourse until we can examine the deep bond that evidently lies between us.' And, the next day, a one-way ticket to Munich, and she disappeared into the Black Forest for years. She wasn't happy, though," he added. "Didn't know when she was well off, you see." When Solanka left Eleanor, she added a bitter postscript to these reflections. "Actually, I'd like to hear their side of these stories," she said during one difficult telephone call. "Maybe you were just a coldhearted bastard from the start."

Life is fury, he'd thought. Fury—sexual, Oedipal, political, magical, brutal—drives us to our finest heights and coarsest depths. Out of *furia* comes creation, inspiration, originality, passion, but also violence, pain, unafraid destruction, the giving and receiving of blows from which we never recover. The Furies pursue us; Shiva dances his furious dance to create and also to destroy. But never mind about gods! Sara, ranting at him, represented the human spirit in its purest, least socialized form. This is what we are, how we civilize ourselves to disguise the terrifying human animal in us—the exalted, transcendent, self-destructive, untrammelled lord of creation. We raise each other to the heights of joy. We tear each other limb from fucking limb.

Malik Solanka, strolling alone toward a late-night Kieslowski double bill at the Lincoln Plaza, tried to imagine his own life as a "Dekalog" movie. "A Short Film About Desertion." Which Commandments could his story be said to illustrate or, as the Kieslowski scholar who introduced last week's episodes preferred, interrogate? There were many Commandments against the sins of improper commission. Covetousness, adultery, lust—these things were anathematized. But where were the laws against sins of improper omission? Thou Shalt Not Be an Absentee Father. Cometh to

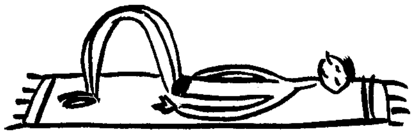
Thinkst of It, Thou Shalt Not Walk Out of Thy Life Without a Fucking Good Reason, Buster, and What You've Put Up So Far Doesn't Even Come Close. What Dost Thou Think, Thou Canst Do Any Goddam Thing Thou Wantest? Who the Fuck Dost Thou Imagine Thou Ist: Hugh Hefner? The Dalai Lama? Donald Trump? At What the Sam Hill Art Thou Playing? Huh, Bub? *Huh*?

Sara Lear was probably right here in town, he suddenly thought. She would be in her late fifties now, a big shot with a booming portfolio, the secret booking numbers for Pastis and Nobu, and a weekend place south of the highway in, ah, Amagansett. Thank heavens there was no need to track her down, look her up, congratulate her on her life choices. How she would have crowed! For they had lived long enough to witness the absolute victory of advertising. Back in the seventies, working in adland had been slightly shameful. You confessed it to your friends with lowered voice and downcast eyes. Advertising was a confidence trick, a cheat, the notorious enemy of promise. It was—a horrible thought in that era—nakedly capitalist. Selling things was *low*. Now everyone—eminent writers, great painters, architects, politicians—wanted to be in on the act. Reformed alcoholics plugged booze. Everybody, as well as everything, was for sale. Advertisements had become colossi, clambering like Kong up the walls of buildings. What was more, they were loved. When Solanka watched TV, he still turned the sound down at commercial breaks, but everyone else, he was sure, turned it up. The commercials soothed America's pain: its head pain, its gas pain, its heartache, its loneliness, the pain of babyhood and of old age, of being a parent and of being a child, the pain of manhood and of women's pain, the pain of success and that of failure, the good pain of the athlete and the bad pain of the guilty, the anguish of loneliness and of ignorance, the needle-sharp torment of the cities and the dull, mad ache of the empty plains, the pain of wanting without knowing what was wanted, the agony of the howling void within each watching, semi-conscious self. No wonder advertising was popular. It made things better. It showed you the road. It wasn't a part of the problem. It solved things.

As a matter of fact, there was a copywriter living in Professor Solanka's building. He wore red suspenders and Hathaway shirts, and even smoked a pipe. He had introduced himself that very afternoon by the mailboxes in the vestibule, holding a set of rolled-up layouts. (What was it about Solanka's solitude, the professor silently asked himself, that apparently obliged his neighbors to disturb it?) "Mark Skywalker, from the planet Tatooine."

Solanka was uninterested in this bow-tied, bespectacled, markedly un-Jedi-knight-like young man, and as a former science-fiction buff despised the lowbrow space opera of the "Star Wars" cycle. But he had already learned not to argue with self-invention in New York. He had also learned, when giving his own name, to omit the "Professor." Learning annoyed people, and formality was a form of pulling rank. This was the country of the diminutive. Even the stores and eating places got friendly fast. Right around the corner, he could find Andy's, Bennie's, Josie's, Gabriela's, Vinnie's, Freddie & Pepper's. The country of reserve, of understatement and the unsaid, he had left behind, and a good thing, too, on the whole. At Hana's (medical supplies), you could walk right in and buy a MASTECTOMY BRA. The unsayable was right there in the window, in red letters a foot high. "Solly Solanka," he replied, neutrally, surprising himself by using the disliked nickname.

"You're British, right?" Skywalker went on. (Solanka didn't get into the postcolonial, migrational niceties.) "Do me a favor. Take a look at these." The young adman had unrolled the layouts and spread them on the hall table. "I want to get your honest opinion," Skywalker explained. "It's a corporate-image campaign." The layouts showed double-page-spread images of famous city skylines at sunset. Solanka gestured vaguely, not knowing how to respond. "The copy line," Skywalker prompted. "Is it O.K.?" All the pictures bore the same heading: "THE SUN NEVER SETS ON AMERICAN EXPRESS INTERNATIONAL BANKING CORPORATION."



"Good. It's good," Solanka said, not knowing if it was in fact good, average, or terrible. But Skywalker evidently wanted more. "As a Britisher," he probed, "you're saying the British won't be insulted?"

This was a genuine puzzlement. "Because of the British Empire, I mean. On which the sun never set. There's no offense intended. That's what I want to be sure of. That the line doesn't come across as an insult to your country's glorious past." Professor Solanka felt huge irritation rise up in his breast. He experienced a strong desire to screech at this fellow with the damn-fool alias, to call him names and perhaps actually smack him across the face with an open hand. It took an effort to restrain himself, and, in a level voice, to reassure earnest young Mark in his David Ogilvy-clone outfit that even the most red-faced colonels in England were unlikely to be upset by his banal formulation. Then he hurried into his apartment, shut the door with his heart pounding, leaned against the wall, closed his eyes, gasped, and shook. Yes, this was the other side of the coin of his new hi-how-*you*-doin', up-front, in-your-face, mastectomy-bra environment: this new cultural hypersensitivity, this almost pathological fear of giving offense. O.K., he knew that, everybody knew it, that wasn't the point. The point was, where was all this anger coming from? Why was he being caught off guard, time and again, by surges of rage that almost overwhelmed his will?

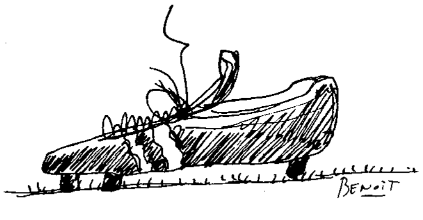
He took a cold shower. Then for two hours he lay in his darkened bedroom, with both air-conditioner and ceiling fan working flat out to battle the heat and humidity. Controlling his breathing helped, and he also used visualization techniques to relax. He imagined the anger as a physical object, a soft, dark throbbing lump, and mentally drew a red triangle around it. Then he slowly made the triangle smaller, until the lump disappeared. It worked. His heartbeat returned to normal. He switched on the bedroom television, a whirring and clanking old monster of a set dating from an earlier generation of technology, and watched El Duque on the mound, his amazing, hyperbolic action. The pitcher coiled himself up until his knee almost touched his nose, then unwound like a whip. Even in this erratic, almost panicky season in the Bronx, Hernandez inspired calm.

Professor Solanka made the mistake of flipping briefly to CNN, where it was all Elián, all the time. A little boy had been rescued from a rubber ring in the sea, his mother had drowned, and at once the religious hysteria had begun. There were posters that read "Elián, Save Us." The cult, born of Miami's necessary demonology—according to which Castro the devil, Hannibal-the-Cannibal Castro, would eat the boy alive, tear out his immortal soul and munch it down with a few fava beans and a glass of red wine—instantly developed a priesthood as well. The dreadful media-fixated uncle was anointed pope of Eliánismo, and his daughter, poor Marisleysis, with her "nervous exhaustion," was exactly the type who would, any day now, start witnessing the six-year-old's first miracles. There was even a fisherman involved. And, of course, apostles, spreading the word: the photographer in Elián's bedroom, the TV-movie people waving contracts, publishing houses doing likewise, CNN itself, and all the other news crews, with their uplink dishes and fuzzy mikes. Meanwhile, in Cuba, the little boy was being transformed into quite another totem. A dying revolution, a revolution of the old and straggle-bearded, held the child up as proof of its renewed youth. In this version, Elián rising from the waters became an image of the revolution's immortality: a lie.

He had to go through it all over again: the shaking, the pounding, the gasping for air, the shower, the darkness, the breathing, the visualization. No drugs; he had put them off limits, and he was also avoiding head doctors. The gangster Tony Soprano might be going to a shrink, but fuck him, he was fictional. Professor Solanka had resolved to face his demon by himself. Psychoanalysis and chemistry felt like cheating. If the duel was to be truly won, if the demon that possessed him was to be wrestled to the mat and consigned to Hell, it had to be just the two of them going at it, ass naked, without restraint, in a bare-knuckle fight to the death.

It was dark when Malik Solanka deemed himself fit to leave the apartment. Shaken, but putting on a show of jauntiness, he set out for the Kieslowski double feature. If he had been a Vietnam vet or even a reporter who'd seen too much, his behavior would have been more readily comprehensible. But the only war Professor Solanka had been in was life itself, and life had been kind to him. He had money and what most people thought of as an ideal family. Both his wife and child were exceptional. Yet he had sat in his kitchen, in the middle of the night, with murder on the brain: actual murder, not the metaphorical kind. He'd even brought a carving knife upstairs and stood for a terrible, dumb minute over the body of his sleeping wife. Then he had turned away, slept in the spare bedroom, and in the morning had packed his bags and caught the first plane to New York without giving a reason. What had happened was beyond reason. He'd needed to put an ocean, at least an ocean, between himself and what he had almost done. So the empress of West Seventieth Street had been closer to the truth than she knew.

He was waiting in line at the cinema, lost inside himself. Then a young man's voice started up behind his right ear, not caring who listened, telling its story to a companion but also to the whole line, to the city; as if the city cared. To live in Metropolis was to know that the exceptional was as commonplace as diet soda, that abnormality was the popcorn norm: "So finally I called her, and I'm like, 'Hi, Mom, wassup,' and she goes, 'You wanna know who's sitting down to dinner here in Nowheresville, who's right here eating your mother's meat loaf? We've got Santa Claus, that's all. Santa Claus, sitting right there at the head of the table, where your snake skunk weasel father used to set his motherfuckin' dumb-fuck ass.' I swear to God. I mean, it's 3 P.M. and she's already losing it. That's what she said, word for fuckin' word. Santa Claus. And I go, 'Sure, Mom, and where's Jesus at?' And she comes back with, 'That's *Mr.* Jesus Christ to you, young man, and I'll have you know that Mr. Jesus *H.* Christ is takin' care of the fish course.' That was all I could handle, so I'm like, 'So long, Mom, give the gentlemen my best. Have a happy.'" And alongside the male voice there was a woman's hard, horrified laughter. *Ha-ha-ha-ha.*



He stayed out all night after the films, but there was no peace to be found, even when walking through the dead of night, much less in the already bustling hour after the dawn. There was no dead of night. He could not remember his exact route, had the impression of having gone all the way downtown and back on or around Broadway, but he could remember the sheer volume of the white and colored noise. He could remember the noise dancing in abstract shapes before his red-rimmed eyes. The coat of his linen suit weighed heavily, damply, on his shoulders, yet in the name of rectitude, of how things should be done, he kept it on; also his straw Panama hat. The noise of the city increased almost daily, or perhaps it was his sensitivity to that noise, which was being turned up to the screaming point. Garbage trucks moved like giant cockroaches through the city, roaring.

The news of Solanka's split from Eleanor had sent shock waves through their circle. Each marriage that breaks interrogates those that continue to hold. Malik Solanka was conscious of having initiated a chain reaction of spoken and unspoken questions at breakfast tables across the city and in bedrooms, and in other cities, too: Are we still good? O.K., how good? Are there things you're not telling me? Am I going to wake up one day and you'll say something that makes me realize I've been sharing my bed with a stranger? How will tomorrow rewrite yesterday? How will next week unmake the past five, ten, fifteen years? Are you bored? Is it my fault? Are you weaker than I thought? Is it him? Is it her? Is it the sex? The children? Do you want to fix it? Is there anything to fix? Do you love me? Do you still love me? Do I still, oh Jesus, Jesus, love you?

A knife held over the sleeping figures of your wife and child cannot be mentioned to anyone, much less explained. And Solanka had no answer to the hows and whys of this appalling, enigmatic event. *Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand*? There he had simply been, like guilty Macbeth, and the weapon, too, was simply there, impossible to wish away or to edit out of the image afterward. That he had not plunged the knife into sleeping hearts did not make him innocent. To hold the knife so, running his thumb along the Sabatier blade, testing its sharpness in the dark, and to stand thus was more than enough. Guilty, guilty! This knife was his story now, and he had come to America to write it.

No! In despair, to *unwrite* it. Not to be but to un-be. He had flown to the land of self-creation, the home of Mark Skywalker the Jedi copywriter in red suspenders, the country whose paradigmatic modern fiction was the story of a man who remade himself—his past, his present, his shirts, even his name—for love; and here, in this place from whose narratives he was all but disconnected, he intended to attempt the first phase of such a restructuring—namely, the complete erasure, or "master deletion," of the old program. Somewhere in the existing software there was a bug, a potentially lethal flaw. Nothing less than the unselfing of the self would do. If he could cleanse the whole machine, then maybe the bug, too, would end up in the trash. After that, he could perhaps begin to construct a new man. He fully saw that this was a fantastic, unrealistic ambition, if intended seriously, literally, instead of in a manner of speaking; nevertheless, literally was how he meant it, no matter how unhinged that might sound. For what was the alternative? Confession, fear, separation, policemen, head doctors, shame, divorce, jail? The steps down into that inferno seemed inexorable. And the worse inferno he would leave behind, the burning blade turning forever in the mind's eye of his growing son.

He had conceived, in that instant, an almost religious belief in the power of flight. Flight would save others from him, and him from himself. He would go where he was not known and wash himself in that unknowing. A memory from forbidden Bombay peremptorily insisted on his attention: the memory of the day, in 1955, when Mr. Venkat—the big-deal banker whose son Chandra was the ten-year-old Malik's best friend—became a sannyasi on his sixtieth birthday, and abandoned his family forever, wearing no more than a Gandhian loincloth, with a long wooden staff in one hand and a begging bowl in the other. Malik had always liked Mr. Venkat, who would tease him by asking him to pronounce, very quickly, his full, polysyllabically tumbling South Indian name: Balasubramanyam Venkataraghavan. "Come on, boy, faster," he'd coax Malik, as his childish tongue stumbled over the syllables. "Don't you wish you had a name as magnificent as this?"

Malik Solanka lived in a second-floor apartment in a building called Noor Ville, on Methwold's Estate, off Warden Road. The Venkats occupied the other apartment on that floor, and gave every indication of being a happy family—one that, in fact, Malik envied every day of his life. Now both apartment doors stood open, and children crowded wide-eyed around stricken adults as Mr. Venkat took leave of his old life forever. From the depths of the Venkats' apartment came the noise of a crackly 78: a song by the Ink Spots, Mr. Venkat's favorite group. The spectacle of Mrs. Venkat crying her eyes out on his mother's shoulder hit little Malik Solanka hard. As the banker turned to go, Malik suddenly called out to him. "Balasubramanyam Venkataraghavan!" And then, saying it faster and louder, until he was simultaneously gabbling and screaming: "Balasubramanyamvenkataraghavanbalasubramanyamvenkataraghavanbalasubramanyamvenkataraghavan*balasubramanyamvenkataraghavan!*"

The banker paused gravely. He was a small, bony man, kind-faced, bright-eyed. "That is very well said, and the speed is impressive, too," he commented. "And because you have repeated it five times without a mistake, I will answer five questions, if you wish to ask them."

Where are you going? "I am going in search of knowledge and, if possible, of peace." Why aren't you wearing your office suit? "Because I have given up my employment." Why is Mrs. Venkat crying? "That is a question for her." When are you coming back? "This step, Malik, is once and for all." What about Chandra? "He will understand one day." Don't you care about us anymore? "That

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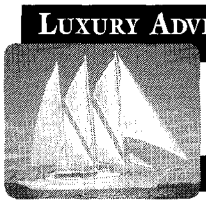

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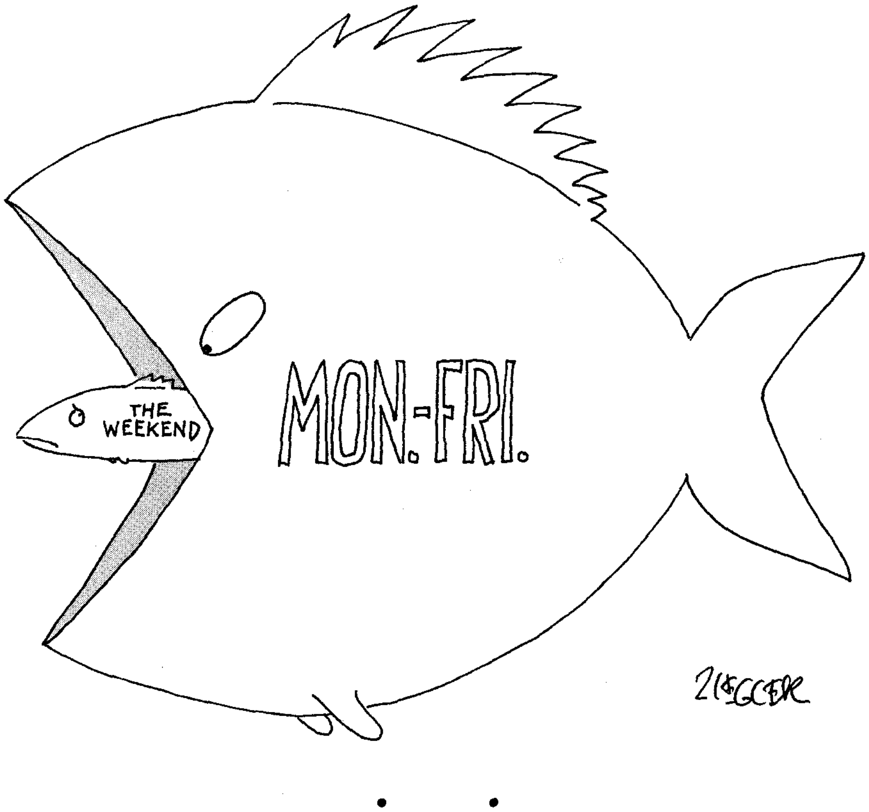


is the sixth question. Over the limit. Be a good child now. Be a good friend to your friend." Malik Solanka remembered his mother trying, after Mr. Venkat went away down the hill, to explain the philosophy of the sannyasi, of a man's decision to give up all possessions and worldly connections, severing himself from life, in order to come closer to the Divine before it was time to die. Mr. Venkat had left his affairs in good order; his family would be well provided for. But he would never return. Malik did not understand most of what he was being told, but he had a vivid comprehension of what Chandra meant when, later that day, he broke his father's old Ink Spots records and shouted, "I hate knowledge! And peace, too. I really hate peace *a lot.*"

When a man without faith mimicked the choices of the faithful, the result was likely to be both vulgar and inept. Professor Malik Solanka donned no loincloth, picked up no begging bowl. Instead of surrendering himself to the fortune of the street and the charity of strangers, he had flown business class to J.F.K., checked briefly into the Lowell, called a real-estate broker, and had speedily lucked out, finding himself this commodious West Side sublet. He had acted without thinking, had been strapped into his airline seat before he allowed himself to reflect; then he'd simply accepted the imperfect choice his reflexes had made, agreed to proceed down the unlikely road onto which his feet, without prompting, had turned. A sannyasi in New York, a sannyasi with a duplex and a credit card, was a contradiction in terms. Very well. He would be that contradiction and, in spite of his oxymoronic nature, pursue his goal. And if he failed, then he failed, but one did not contemplate what lay beyond failure when one was still trying to succeed. After all, Jay Gatsby, the highest bouncer of them all, failed, too, in the end, but lived out, before he crashed, that brilliant, brittle, gold-hatted, exemplary American life.

It was eight in the morning by the time Solanka turned into his street, and even the buildings had begun to speak to him in the sonorous manner of the supremely confident, of the rulers of the world. The School of the Blessed Sacrament did its Latin carved in stone: "PARENTES CATHOLICOS HORTAMUR UT DILECTAE PROLI SUAE EDUCATIONEM CHRISTIANEM ET CATHOLICAM PROCURENT." The sentiment struck no responsive chord in Solanka. Next door, proselytizing in a more fortune-cookieish sentiment inscribed in gilded letters rang out from a mighty De Mille-Assyrian entrance: "IF FRATERNAL LOVE HELD ALL MEN BOUND HOW BEAUTIFUL THE WORLD WOULD BE." Three-quarters of a century ago this edifice, garishly handsome in the city's brashest manner, had been dedicated, on the cornerstone, "to Pythianism," without any embarrassment at the clash of Greek and Mesopotamian metaphors. Such plundering and jumbling of the storehouse of yesterday's empires, this melting pot or *métissage* of past power, was the indicator of present might.

To the devil with this classical mishmash, Professor Solanka silently exclaimed. For a greater deity was all around him: America, in the highest hour of its hybrid, omnivorous power. America, to which he had come to erase himself. To be free of attachment and so, also, of anger, fear, and pain. Eat me, Professor Solanka silently prayed. Eat me, America, and give me peace.

As he approached his apartment, he saw a workman hanging in a cradle outside his window, doing repairs to the exterior of the building and, in loud, rolling Punjabi, shouting instructions and dirty jokes to his partner smoking a bidi on the sidewalk below. This when Solanka was almost too tired to remain upright. The city was teaching him a lesson. There was to be no escape from intrusion, from noise. He had crossed the ocean to separate his life from life. He had come in search of silence and had found a loudness greater than the one he'd left behind.

Breathe. He did a slow, circular breathing exercise. Very well.

And in the apartment the Polish cleaner Wislawa had arrived. She came with the sublet, refused to do the ironing, left cobwebs untouched in corners, and after she left you could make a line in the dust on the mantelpiece. On the plus side, she had a pleasant temperament and a big, gummy smile. However, if you gave her half a chance, or even if you didn't, she would plunge into narrative. The dangerous, unsuppressible power of the tale. Wislawa, a devout Catholic, had had her faith profoundly shaken by an ostensibly true story told by her husband, who got it from his uncle who got it from a trusted friend who knew the person concerned, a certain Ryszard, who was for many years the personal driver of the Pope—this, of course, before he was elected to the Holy See. When it was time for that election, Ryszard the chauffeur drove the future Pope all the way across Europe, a Europe standing on the very hinge of history, on the cusp of great changes. Ah, the comradeship of the two men, the simple human pleasures and annoyances of such a long journey! And then they arrived in the Holy City. The man of the cloth was walled up with his peers, and the driver waited. At last the white smoke was seen, the cry of *habemus Papam* was raised, and then there was a cardinal all in red, descending an enormous, wide flight of yellow stone steps slowly, and crabwise, like a character in a Fellini movie, and right at the bottom of the steps waited the smoky little car and its excited driver. The cardinal came mopping his brow and puffing up to the driver's window, which Ryszard had wound down in anticipation of the news. And so the cardinal was able to deliver the personal message of the new, the Polish, Pope: "You're fired."

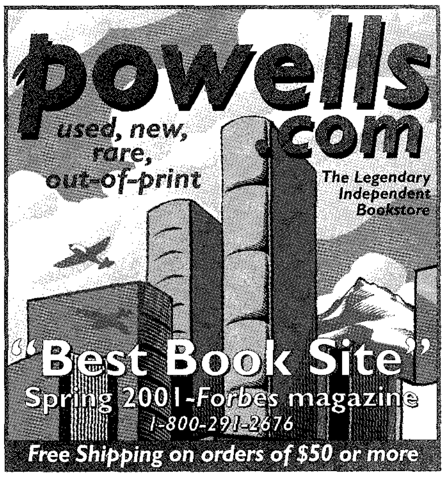
Solanka, not a Catholic, not a believer, not much interested in the story even if true, not remotely convinced that it was true, not anxious to referee the cleaner's wrestling match with the imp of doubt who presently had her immortal soul in a stranglehold, would have preferred not to speak to Wislawa at all, would have wished her to glide around the apartment rendering it spotless and habitable, but her soul, her nonexistent soul, continued intermittently to insist on his pastoral, his uncaring care.

Solanka's head began to spin lightly. Sleep-deprived, wild of thought, he headed for the bedroom. This was what we brought with us on our journey across oceans, beyond frontiers, through life: our little storehouse of anecdote and what-happened-next, our private once-upon-a-time. We were our stories, and when we died, if we were very lucky, our immortality would be in another such tale.

This was the great truth against which Malik Solanka had set his face. It was precisely his back-story that he wanted to destroy. Never mind where he came from or who, when little Malik could barely walk, had deserted his mother and so given him permission, years later, to do the same. To the devil with stepfathers and pushes on the top of a young boy's head and dressing up and weak mothers and guilty Desdemonas and the whole, useless baggage of blood and tribe. He had come to America, like so many before him, to receive the benison of being Ellis Islanded, of starting over. Give me a name, America, make of me a Buzz or Chip or Spike. Bathe me in amnesia and clothe me in your powerful unknowing. Enlist me in your J. Crew and hand me my mouse ears! No longer a historian but a man without histories let me be. I'll rip my lying mother tongue out of my throat and speak your broken English instead. Scan me, digitize me, beam me up. If the past is the sick old Earth, then, America, be my flying saucer. Fly me to the rim of space. The moon's not far enough.

But still through the ill-fitting bedroom window the stories came pouring in. What would Saul and Gayfryd—"she became the Stanley Cup of trophy wives when trophy wives were as common as Porsches"—do now that they were down to their last forty or fifty million? . . . And, hooray, Muffie Potter Aston's pregnant! . . . And wasn't that Paloma Huffington de Woody getting friendly with S. J. (Yitzhak) Perelman on Gibson Beach, Sagaponack? . . . And did you hear about Griffin and his great, big, beautiful Dahl? . . . What, Nina's planning to launch a *perfume*? But, my dear, she's so over, she's starting to smell like *roadkill*. . . . And Meg and Dennis, just moved to Splitsville, are squabbling over who gets not just the CD collection but the *guru*. . . . Which big-name Hollywood actress has been whispering that a new young star's elevation has Sapphic origins involving a major studio boss? . . . And have you *read* Karen's latest, "Thin Thighs for Life"? . . . And Lotus, coolest of niteries, nixed O. J. Simpson's birthday bash! Only in America, kids, only in America!

With his hands over his ears, and still wearing his ruined linen suit, Professor Solanka slept. ◆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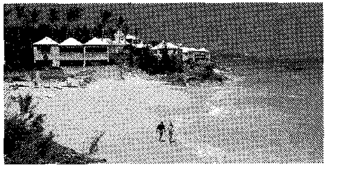

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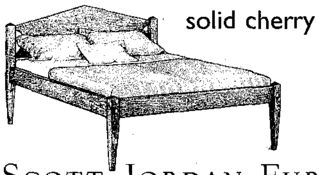

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SUPER FRIENDS

Sumner Redstone and the rules of the corporate memoir.

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

In the early nineteen-nineties, Sumner Redstone, the head of Viacom, wanted to merge his company with Paramount Communications. The problem was that the chairman of Paramount, Martin Davis, was being difficult. As Redstone recounts in his new autobiography, "A Passion to Win" (Simon & Schuster; $26), he and Davis would meet at, say, a charitable function, and Davis would make it sound as if the deal were imminent. Then, abruptly, he would back away. According to Redstone, Davis was a ditherer, a complicated and emotionally cold man who couldn't bear to part with his company. Yet, somehow in the course of their dealings, Redstone writes, he and Davis developed a "mutual respect and fond friendship." They became, he says a page later, "friends" who "enjoyed each other's company and were developing a close working rapport," and who had, he tells us two pages after that, "a great affection for each other." The turning point in the talks comes when Davis and Redstone have dinner in a dining room at Morgan Stanley, and Redstone is once more struck by how Davis "had a genuine affection for me." When the two have dinner again, this time at Redstone's suite in the Carlyle Hotel, Davis looks out over the spectacular lights of nighttime Manhattan and says, "You know, Sumner, when this deal gets done, they'll build a big statue of you in the middle of Central Park and I'll be forgotten." "No, Martin," Redstone replies. "They'll build statues of both of us and I will be looking up to you in admiration." Davis laughs. "It was just the right touch," Redstone reports, and one can almost imagine him at that point throwing a brawny forearm around Davis's shoulders and giving him a manly squeeze.

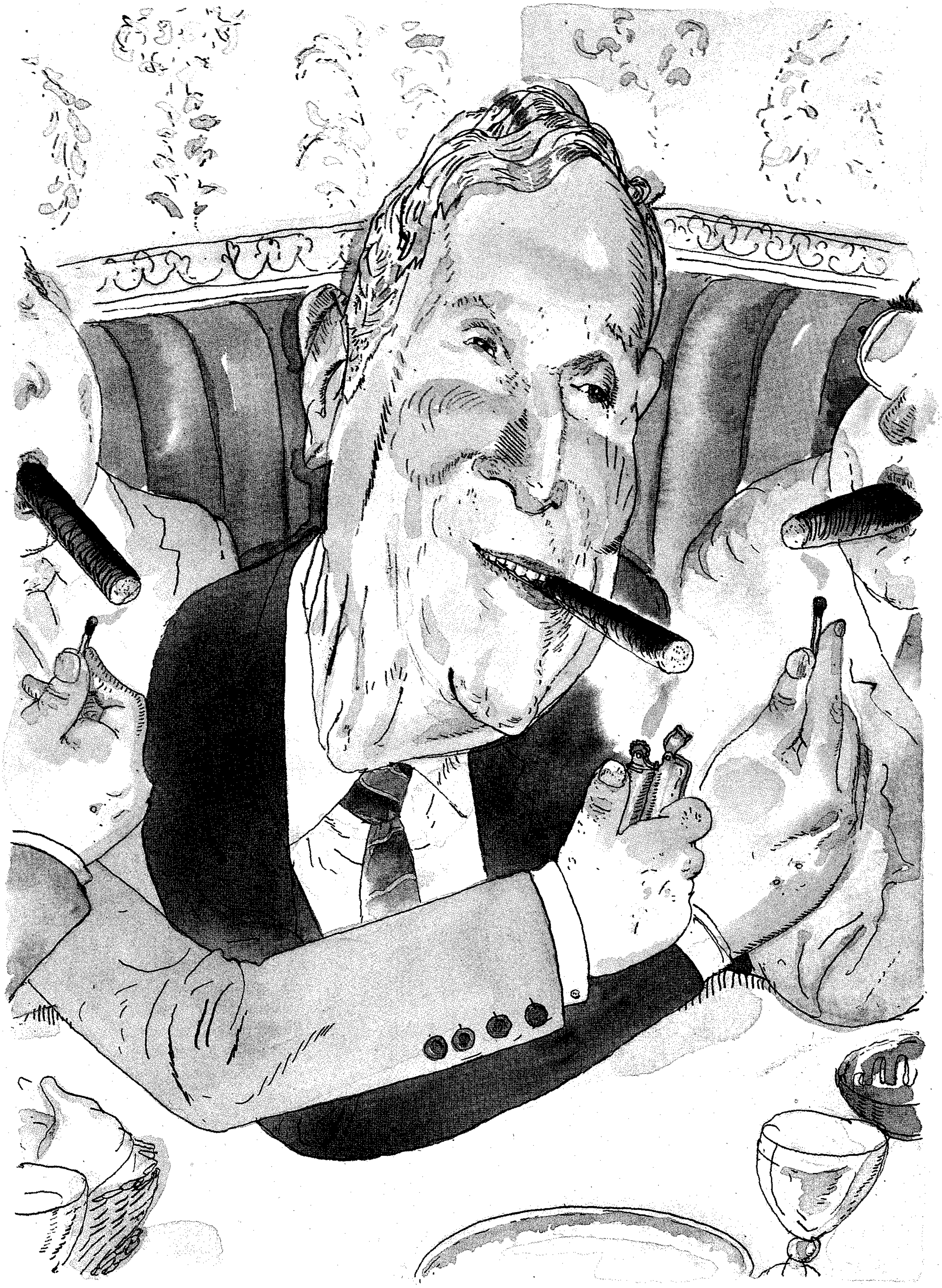
"A Passion to Win," which Redstone wrote with Peter Knobler, is an account of a man's rise to the top of a multibillion-dollar media empire. It is the tale of the complex negotiations, blinding flashes of insight, and lengthy dinners at exclusive Manhattan hotels which created the colossus that is Viacom. But mostly it is a story about the value of friendship, about how very, very powerful tycoons like Redstone have the surprising ability to transcend their own egos and see each other, eye to eye, as human beings.

For instance, Gerald Levin, the head of Time Warner, might look like a rival of Redstone's. Not at all. He is, Redstone tells us, "a very close friend." Redstone says that he and Sherry Lansing, who heads Paramount Pictures, a division of Viacom, "are not just business associates, we are extremely close friends." So, too, with Geraldine Laybourne, who used to head Viacom's Nickelodeon division. "We were not just business associates," he writes, in the plainspoken manner that is his trademark. "We were friends." The singer Tony Bennett was one of Redstone's idols for years, and then one day Redstone's employees threw him a surprise birthday party and there was Bennett, who had come thousands of miles to sing a song. "Now," Redstone says proudly, "he is my friend." The producer Bob Evans? "A good friend." Aaron Spelling? "One of my closest friends." Bill and Hillary? "I have come to know and like the Clintons." Redstone's great friend Martin Davis warned him once about Barry Diller: "Don't trust him. He's got too big an ego." But Redstone disagreed. "Barry Diller and I were extremely friendly," he says. Ted Kennedy he met years ago, at a get-together of business executives. Everyone else was flattering Kennedy. Not so Redstone. A true friend is never disingenuous. As he recalls, he said to Kennedy,

> "Look, I don't want to disagree with everybody, but, Senator, the problem is that you believe . . . that you can solve any problem by just throwing money at it. It doesn't work that way."
>
> Conversation ceased, glances were exchanged. Everyone was appalled. Then Senator Kennedy said: "Sumner's right." . . . After that, Senator Kennedy called me regularly when he came to Boston and we developed a lasting friendship.

You might think that Redstone simply becomes friends with anyone he meets who is rich or famous. This is not the case. Once, Redstone was invited to dinner at the office of Robert Maxwell, the British press baron. It was no small matter, since Redstone is one of those moguls for whom dinner has enormous symbolic importance—it is the crucible in which friendships are forged. But Maxwell didn't show up until halfway through the meal: not a friend. On another occasion, Redstone hires a highly touted executive away from the retailing giant Wal-Mart to run his Blockbuster division, and then learns that the man is eating dinner alone in his hotel dining room and isn't inviting his fellow-executives to join him. Dinner alone? Redstone was worried. That was not friendly behavior. The executive, needless to say, was not long for Viacom.

What Redstone likes most in a friend is someone who reminds him of himself. "I respected Malone for having started with nothing and rising to become chairman of the very successful Tele-Communications, Inc.," Redstone writes of John Malone, the billionaire cable titan. "I had admired Kerkorian's success over the years," he says of Kirk Kerkorian, the billionaire corpo-



For Redstone, business is always personal: where others might establish corporate ties, he forms close, if fleeting, friendships.

rate raider. "He started with nothing, and I have a special affection for people who start with nothing and create empires. . . . Today Kirk Kerkorian and I are friends." (They are so friendly, in fact, that they recently had a meal together at Spago.) Of his first meeting with John Antioco, whom Redstone would later hire to run Blockbuster—replacing the executive who ate dinner alone—Redstone writes, "We hit it off immediately. . . . He had come from humble beginnings, which I empathized with." Soon, the two men are dining together. Look at my life, Redstone seems to marvel again and again in "A Passion to Win." You think you see a hard-nosed mogul, selflessly wringing the last dollar out of megadeals on behalf of his shareholders. But inside that mogul beats a heart of warmth and compassion. Ever wonder how Redstone was able to pull off his recent mammoth merger with CBS? He happens to have lunch with the CBS chief, Mel Karmazin, in an exclusive Viacom corporate dining room, and discovers that he and Karmazin are kindred spirits. "Both of us had started with nothing," Redstone writes, "and ended up in control of major corporations." Can you believe it?

In 1984, Lee Iacocca, the chairman of the resurgent Chrysler Corporation, published his autobiography, "Iacocca," with the writer William Novak. It was a charming book, in which Iacocca came across as a homespun, no-nonsense man of the people, and it sold more copies than any other business book in history. This was good news for Iacocca, because it made him a household name. But it was bad news for the rest of us, because it meant that an entire class of C.E.O.s promptly signed up ghostwriters and turned out memoirs designed to portray themselves as homespun, no-nonsense men of the people.

"Iacocca" began with a brief, dramatic prologue, in which he described his last day at Ford, where he had worked his entire life. He had just been fired by Henry Ford II, and it was a time of great personal crisis. "Before I left the house," he wrote, establishing the conflict between him and Henry Ford that would serve as the narrative engine of the book, "I kissed my wife, Mary, and my two daughters, Kathi and Lia. . . . Even today, their pain is what stays with me. It's like the lioness and her cubs. If the hunter knows what's good for him, he will leave the little ones alone. Henry Ford made my kids suffer, and for that I'll never forgive him." Now every C.E.O. book begins with a short, dramatic prologue, in which the author describes a day of great personal crisis that is intended to serve as the narrative engine of the book. In "Work in Progress," by Michael Eisner, Disney's C.E.O., it's the day he suffered chest pains at the Herb Allen conference in Sun Valley: "I spent much of dinner at Herb Allen's talking to Tom Brokaw, the NBC anchorman, who told me a long story about fly-fishing with his friend Robert Redford. . . . The pain in my arms returned." In "A Passion to Win," it's the day Redstone clung to a ledge during a fire at the Copley Plaza Hotel, in Boston, eventually suffering third-degree burns over forty-five per cent of his body: "The pain was excruciating but I refused to let go. That way was death."

Iacocca followed the dramatic prologue with a chapter on his humble origins. It opens, "Nicola Iacocca, my father, arrived in this country in 1902 at the age of twelve—poor, alone, and scared." Now every C.E.O. has humble origins. Then Iacocca spoke of an early mentor, a gruff, no-nonsense man who instilled lessons that guide him still. His name was Charlie Beacham, and he was "the kind of guy you'd charge up the hill for even though you knew very well you could get killed in the process. He had the rare gift of being tough and generous at the same time." Sure enough, everywhere now there are gruff, no-nonsense men instilling lessons that guide C.E.O.s to this day. ("Nobbe, who was in his sixties, was a stern disciplinarian and a tough guy who didn't take crap from anyone," writes the former Scott Paper and Sunbeam C.E.O. Al Dunlap, in his book "Mean Business." "He was always chewing me out. . . . Still, Nobbe rapidly won my undying respect and admiration because he wore his bastardness like a well-earned badge of honor.")

The legacy of "Iacocca" wouldn't matter so much if most C.E.O.s were, in fact, homespun men of the people who had gruff mentors, humble beginnings, and searing personal crises that shaped their lives and careers. But they aren't. Redstone's attempt to play the humble-beginnings card, for instance, is compromised by the fact that he didn't exactly have humble beginnings. Although his earliest years were spent in a tenement, his family's fortunes rapidly improved. He went to Harvard and Harvard Law School. His father was a highly successful businessman, and it was his father's company that served as the basis for the Viacom empire. (Just why Redstone continues to think that he

"It's too hot to eat."

comes from nothing, under the circumstances, is an interesting case study in the psychology of success: perhaps, if you are worth many billions, an upper-middle-class upbringing simply *feels* like nothing.) Eisner's personal crisis ends with him driving himself to Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles—one of the best hospitals in the world—where he is immediately met by not one but two cardiologists, who take him to a third cardiologist, who tells Eisner that the procedure he is about to undergo, an angiogram, a common surgical procedure, is ninety-eight per cent safe. In "On the Firing Line," the former Apple C.E.O. Gil Amelio's day of personal crisis is triggered merely by walking down the halls of his new company: "In each of the offices near mine toiled some key executive I was just coming to know, wrestling with problems that would only gradually be revealed to me. I wondered what caged alligators they would let loose at me on some future date." Dunlap, meanwhile, tells us that one of his first acts as C.E.O. of Scott Paper was, in an orgy of unpretentiousness, to throw out the bookshelves in his office and replace them with Aboriginal paintings from Australia: "To me, the paintings made a lot more sense. They showed people who had to survive by their wits, people who couldn't call out for room service." Among Dunlap's gruff mentors was the Australian multimillionaire Kerry Packer, and one day, while playing tennis with Packer, Dunlap has a personal crisis. He pops a tendon. Packer rushes over, picks him up, and carries him to a lounge chair. "This was not only a wealthy man and a man who had political power, this was a physically powerful man," Dunlap reports. "In the end," he adds, taking Iacocca's lioness and Amelio's alligators to the next level, "Kerry and I split because we were just too similar. We were like two strong-willed, dominant animals who hunted together and brought down the biggest prey, but, when not hunting, fought each other." It is hard to read passages like these and not shudder at the prospect of the General Electric chairman Jack Welch's upcoming memoir, for which Warner Books paid a seven-million-dollar advance. Who will be tapped as the gruff mentor? What was Welch's career-altering personal crisis? What wild-animal metaphors will he employ? ("As I looked around the room, I felt like a young wildebeest being surveyed by a group of older and larger—but less nimble—wildebeests, whose superior market share and penetration of the herd were no match for my greater hunger, born of my impoverished middle-class upbringing in the jungles of suburban Boston.")

"The Lowells sent us a postcard from the South of France—as if we'd give a damn."

The shame of it is that many of these books could have been fascinating. Scattered throughout Eisner's "Work in Progress," for example, are numerous hints about how wonderfully weird and obsessive Eisner is. He hears that Universal is thinking of building a rival theme park four miles from Disney in Orlando, and he and his assistant climb the fence at the Universal construction site at three in the morning to check on its progress. He sneaks into performances of the musical "Beauty and the Beast" in Los Angeles at least a dozen times, and when the stage version of "The Lion King" has its first tryout, in Minneapolis, he flies there from Los Angeles half a dozen times during the course of one summer to give his "notes." When he is thinking of building Euro Disney, outside Paris, he is told that it takes half an hour to travel by Métro from the Arc de Triomphe to the end of the line, six miles from the Disney site. Eisner gets on the Métro to see for himself. He sets his watch. It takes twenty-five minutes.

By the end of the book, the truth is spilling out from under the breezy façade: Eisner is a compulsive, detail-oriented control freak. That fact, of course, says a lot about why Disney is successful. But you cannot escape the sense, while reading "Work in Progress," that you weren't supposed to reach that conclusion—that the bit about climbing the fence was supposed to be evidence of Eisner's boyish enthusiasm, and the bit about seeing "Beauty and the Beast" a dozen times was supposed to make it look as if he just loved the theatre. This is the sorry state of C.E.O.

memoirs in the post-Iacocca era. It's only when they fail at their intended task that they truly succeed.

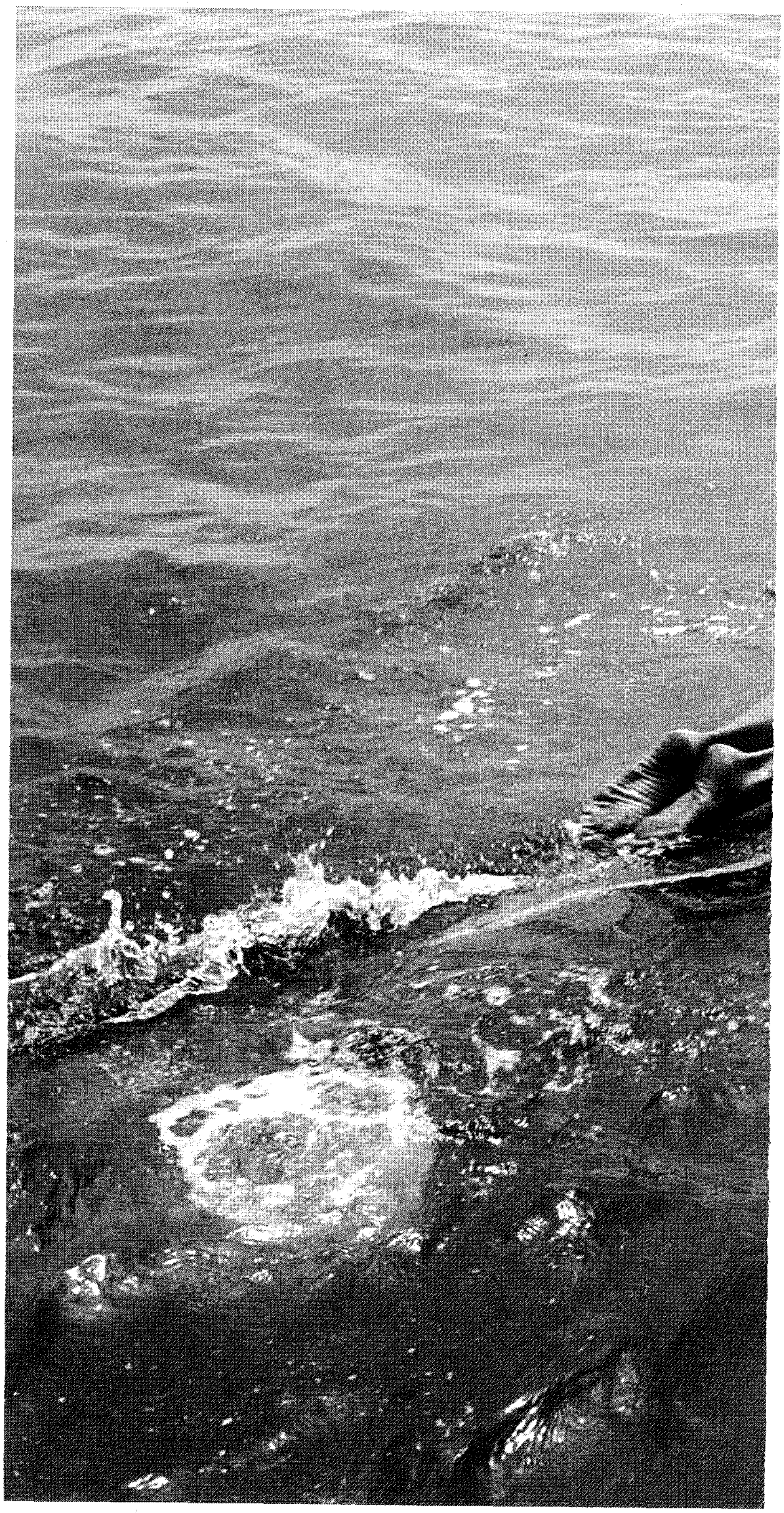
"A Passion to Win" ought to have been a terrific book, because Redstone has a terrific story to tell. He graduated from Boston Latin High School with the highest grade-point average in the school's three-hundred-year history. During the war, he was a cryptographer, part of the team that successfully cracked Japanese military and diplomatic codes. After the war, he had a brilliant career as a litigator, arguing a case before the Supreme Court. The mobster Bugsy Siegel once offered him a job. Then Redstone took over his father's business, and, through a series of breathtaking acquisitions—Viacom, Paramount Communications, Blockbuster, and then CBS—turned himself, in the space of twenty years, into one of the richest men in the world.

What links all these successes, it becomes clear, is a very particular and subtle intelligence. Here, in one of the book's best passages, is Redstone's description of his dealings with Wayne Huizenga, the man from whom he bought Blockbuster. Huizenga, he writes, put together his empire by buying out local video stores around the country:

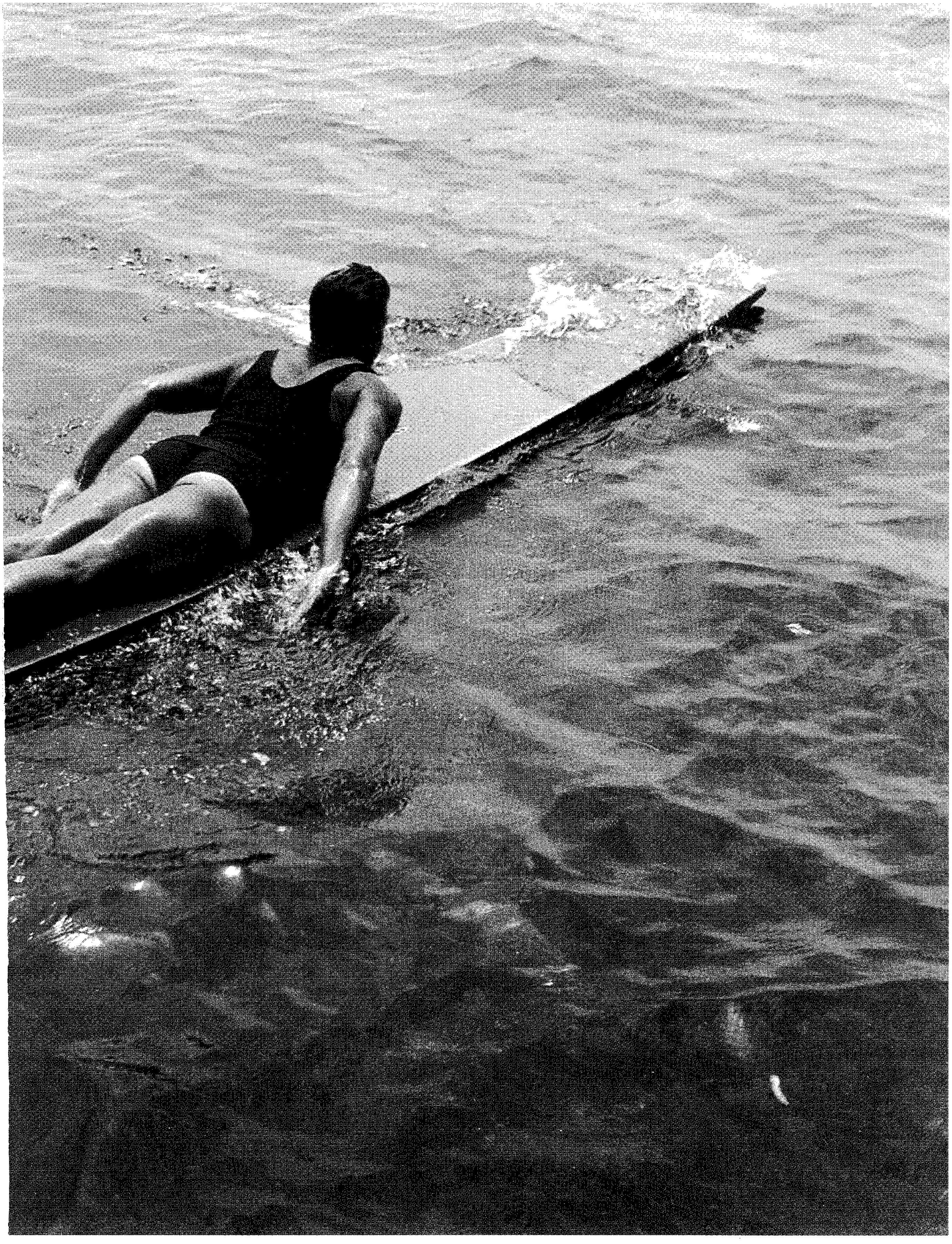
> He and his Blockbuster associates would swoop in on some video guy who saw money for his store dangling from Huizenga's pockets. When negotiations came to an impasse, rather than say, "We have a problem with the proposal," and make a counteroffer, he would say, "Sorry we couldn't do a deal. Good luck to you," shake the guy's hand, pull on the leather coat and head for the elevator.
>
> Seeing the deal about to fall apart, the video operator, who only moments before was seeing dollar signs, would run after him. "Wait, don't go. Come back. Let's talk *about it.*" Huizenga hadn't hit the down button. He had been waiting. That's how he got his concessions.

When Redstone was negotiating for Blockbuster, Huizenga pulled the same stunt. It would be 2 A.M., Redstone says, and Huizenga would put on his coat and head for the exit. But Redstone was wise to him:

> Huizenga would get to the elevator and no one would *run after him.* One time he waited there for fifteen minutes before it dawned on him that we weren't going to chase him. He got to his car. Nothing.
>
> He would soon find some excuse to call—he left papers in our office—waiting for us to



AT THE GALLERIES *In 1925, Tom Blake, who was born on a farm in Wiscon*
Blake, who is paddling on one of his boards in the photograph above, was a physical fit



T. ADLER BOOKS, SANTA BARBARA

igned the first modern surfboard, using as his models ancient Hawaiian boards that had been stored in a museum in Honolulu. f who also invented surfing photography. A show of work by and about him is now at the Ariel Meyerowitz Gallery.

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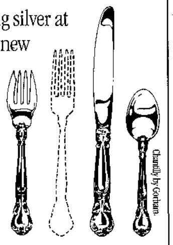

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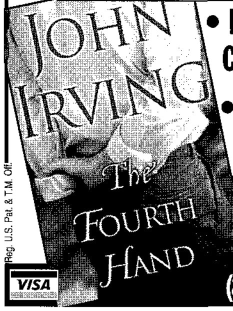

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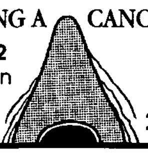


say, “Why don't you come back.” Still, nothing. Once he was literally on his plane, perhaps even circling the neighborhood, when he phoned and said he had to be back in New York for a Merrill Lynch dinner anyway and maybe we could get together.

Redstone has a great intuitive grasp of people. He understood immediately that Huizenga was simply a bully. This kind of insight is hardly rare among people who make their living at the negotiating table. It's the skill of the poker player. But poker is a game of manipulation and exploitation—and Redstone doesn't seem to manipulate or exploit. He persuades and seduces: he would concede that your straight flush beat his three of a kind, but then, over a very long dinner at Spago, he would develop such a rapport with you that you'd willingly split the pot with him. It's no accident that, of Paramount's many suitors, Redstone won the day, because he realized that what Martin Davis needed was the assurance of friendship: he needed to hear about the two statues in Central Park, one gazing in admiration at the other. Redstone's peculiar gift also explains why he seems to have ended up as “friends” with so many of the people with whom he's done business. In Redstone's eyes, these people really are his friends. At the moment when he looked into Davis's eyes that night at the Carlyle, he absolutely believed they had a special bond—and, more important, he made Davis believe it, too. Redstone's heart happily follows his mind, and that's a powerful gift for someone whose success depends on the serial seduction of takeover targets.

Most of us, needless to say, don't think of friendships this way. Our hearts don't always follow our minds; they go off in crazy directions, and we develop loyalties that make no functional sense. But there's little of that fuzziness in Redstone's world, and perhaps that's why “A Passion to Win” is sometimes so chilling. A picture runs in the *Post*, Redstone tells us, that shows him walking down a street in Paris with “a beautiful woman.” Phyllis, his wife of fifty-two years, files for divorce. The news hits him “like a bullet,” he says. “I could not believe that she wanted to end it.” It takes him only a few sentences, though, to recover from his wounds. “Of course, divorce settlement or no, my interest in Viacom's parent company, National Amusements, had been structured in such a way that events in Phyllis's and my personal life would not affect the ownership, control or management of Viacom,” he assures us. Redstone says that he considered Frank Biondi, his longtime deputy at Viacom, “my friend.” But one day he decides to get rid of Biondi, and immediately the gibes and cheap shots appear. Biondi is lazy. Biondi cannot negotiate deals. Biondi is not C.E.O. material. “Frank took the news calmly, almost as if he expected it,” Redstone writes of the firing. “But I was shocked to learn that the first person he called was not his wife, but his lawyer to determine his rights under his contract. We were prepared to honor his contract to the fullest, so that was not an issue, but I found this implicit statement of his priorities to be revealing.” What kind of person says this about a friend? Redstone aligns his passions with his interests, and when his interests change, so do his friendships.

At the very end of “A Passion to Win,” Redstone recounts Viacom's merger with CBS. The deal meant that the network's C.E.O., Mel Karmazin, would come aboard as chief operating officer of Viacom. But that in turn meant that two of Redstone's most trusted executives, Tom Dooley and Philippe Dauman, would have to give up their posts as deputy chairmen. Redstone says that he was “shocked” when he was told this. Dooley and Dauman were not just business associates; they were his “close friends.” Redstone says that he could not accept this, that there was “no way” he could agree to the deal if it meant losing his deputies. At this point, though, we simply don't believe him—we don't believe that someone as smart as Redstone wouldn't have realized this going into the deal with CBS, and we don't believe that Redstone's entirely instrumental friendships could possibly stand in the way of his getting bigger and richer. “A Passion to Win” would have told us much more about Redstone, and about business, if it had confronted this fact and tried to make sense of it. But Redstone is a supremely unself-conscious man, and that trait, which has served him so well in the business world, is fatal in an author. Karmazin comes. Dauman and Dooley go. Redstone moves blithely on to make new best friends. ♦

BOOKS

THE THIN RED LINE

What did you bottle during the war, Dad?

BY JULIAN BARNES

I own a heroic bottle of wine, picked up by chance at auction in a mixed lot. It doesn't look heroic: it is short and dumpy, with a vast punt (the indentation at the bottom) in which you can lose two thumbs, and with a few antique chips of red wax still adhering to the neck. It held Burgundy, a 1904 Clos du Roi, bottled in London by Berry Bros. & Co., of St. James's. Wine labels nowadays ritually proclaim the history and psychology of the liquid within: vintage conditions, ripeness of grapes, percentage of grape varieties, predicted window of drinkability. My Clos du Roi tells a grander story, in tiny lettering at the foot of its label: "Successfully concealed from the enemy during the German occupation of Liège, 1914/1918. Shipped to London, February, 1920." You can imagine the barrels lying low for the duration, being moved from safe house to safe house, disguising themselves as beer or cleaning fluid, then distantly hearing church bells ring . . .

The wine itself? Oh, filthy, as I remember, tawnily moribund; yet somehow heroically filthy. Over the last few years, fifty cases of 1907 Heidsieck champagne have been clanking their way, bottle by bottle, through the London auction houses. For eighty years, they lay at the bottom of the Baltic after the Swedish schooner carrying them—supposedly to the Czar's Army (and why not, it was so long ago?)—was torpedoed by a German submarine in November, 1916. Water pressure held in the corks, even after some of the neck wires had rotted away, and, according to auctioneers, who currently put an estimate of between four hundred and seven hundred pounds per bottle on this fizz, sixty-four metres down in the Baltic offers an ideal cellar temperature. The wine is reportedly splendid, although 1907 has not been previously thought of as a noteworthy champagne vintage. You would mainly be drinking a glass of history, or, rather, survival.

STEFAN ARCZYNSKI/AKG BERLIN

Wehrmacht soldiers drinking to victory at a restaurant in Occupied France, June, 1940.

The French like to maintain that the outbreak of war is always marked by a poor vintage, and victory by a gloriously celebratory one. Thus 1945 was a great vintage, 1939 mediocre, 1918 good, 1914 dismal. This theory, or brief sentimentality, must be of recent origin, since 1870, the year of France's most catastrophic military defeat by the Prussians, also produced one of the most famous prephylloxera claret vintages of all time. History is, at best, a marketing tool. Eighteen-eleven was the "Year of the Comet," and its wines apparently blazed across Europe and the century, though comets have come and gone since without similar viticultural effect. The Bordelais are currently very excited about selling their 2000 futures: when next will you be able to buy a vintage ending in three zeros? Of course, they were also very excited about selling their 1999s: when next will you be able to buy the last wine of a dying millennium?

Despite such marketing ploys, one of the background pleasures of wine remains a distant awareness of history marching—or ambling steadily—to a different beat. The year may still contain the normal twelve months, but they run on a separate course, with the annual terminus at harvesttime. The figures denoting the years will be the same, yet, for the vinous, they will have a different stress (Cuban missile crisis, yes, but also the largest claret vintage since the war). Biodynamic viticulture, recently derived from the theories of Rudolf Steiner and practiced by several top *domaines*, obeys the astrological calendar: pruning and fertilizing are governed by the phases of the moon and the passage of the planets.

For centuries, invaders, besides butchering the populace and deleting the villages, performed a third traditional task, that of destroying the vineyards. It was in part a simple strategic act, like cutting off the water supply. "Simon [de Montfort] rode to Foix with a small force to try the defences of the castle and uproot the vines on the surrounding hillsides," we read. But behind this there may have been a wider intention, that of ripping out a sense of permanence, continuity, identity; ripping out a rivalrous form of history.

In more recent times, the French vineyards have suffered from finding themselves unwittingly in places where armies faced one another. One of the last battles of the Franco-Prussian War was fought among the Burgundy vines of Nuits-St.-Georges; the First World War's trenches devastated the vineyards of Champagne. In the Second World War, given the speed of the German Army's advance in 1940 and the route of its retreat in 1944, French vines escaped much direct damage. The collateral damage inflicted by five years of Occupation is examined in Don and Petie Kladstrup's "Wine and War: The French, the Nazis, and the Battle for France's Greatest Treasure" (Broadway; $24). The thirties had been one of the worst decades on record for winemakers: poor vintages, unsalable wine, depressed market, lack of investment. If the arrival of the Germans seemed at first yet one more problem, like extra mildew and blight, it also provided a certain solution: the invaders compulsorily purchased millions of bottles of wine. They paid a low price, and devalued the French franc to make it even lower; but they also gulped down a substantial wine lake of largely inferior quality. The general view is that the Germans, after some initial gleeful looting, behaved more or less correctly. The *Weinführers* who were put in charge of the three most famous production regions—Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne—were not military men but wine traders who already had wide local contacts. Some "enemy-owned wine" was confiscated in Bordeaux; but more than one British wine merchant discovered at the war's end that his firm's bank account in Paris had been credited by the sequestrators. According to Edmund Penning-Rowsell, the great English authority on Bordeaux wines, the problems of the 1940-44 period "were largely those of shortage of manpower to look after the vineyards and of chemicals to keep the vines free from disease."

The Kladstrups' approach to these anxious yet often undramatic years is leisurely, anecdotal, and decidedly without rigor. Its core consists of a series of interviews with high-profile French winemakers which might happily sit as a "My War" feature in *Wine Spectator:* the Bordeaux proprietress's wartime diary, the Alsace family's divided loyalties, the Loire grower's P.O.W. experiences. Tales are told, myths recycled, and the longer view mostly lacking. Much is made, for instance, of the cheeky way in which the French fobbed off their worst wine on the Germans while walling up their best for future private consumption; how bottles were relabelled, paperwork fiddled, vintages adulterated, and the Boches taken for a ride. This was, however, just a slightly more patriotic version of normal practice: a French wine label was traditionally a work of fiction, and, historically, there can have been few businesses to rival the French wine trade when it came to professional deceit, product laundering, and general passing off. In 1901, Nathaniel Johnston, member of a long-established family of Bordeaux merchants, noted that while the Bordeaux region produced an average of two and a half to three million hectolitres of wine a year, the official figure for the consumption of Bordeaux was between six and seven million hectolitres.

During the Occupation, horses were requisitioned, and men were called up for forced labor in Germany. Women worked among the vines and frequently crafted the wines. (Little has been written on this social phenomenon; the Kladstrups have nothing on it.) The Germans also requisitioned France's copper for their war industry. No copper meant no copper sulfate, which was used to spray the vines against mildew and oidium. The Kladstrups supply a jaunty story of the sixteen-year-old son of a Bordeaux winemaker who set up a secret laboratory and, with the help of some smuggled Belgian copper, produced a certain amount of copper sulfate until the Germans became suspicious, whereupon he stopped. This is fine as far as it goes, but how atypical was the boy, how extensive was the black market in copper, and how did other winegrowers manage? At Château Latour, for instance, growers used ammonia-of-cellulose copper, permitted by the authorities since it required ninety per cent less copper; as a result, mildew damage at Latour in 1941 was trifling. The following year, oidium was countered by using permanganate of potash (instead of sulfur), again with success. Thus Latour's average production for the war years remained comparable to what it had been through the thirties. For winemakers, as for other farmers, times are always terrible unless they are self-evidently cornucopian. Throughout the war, Latour continued to pay a dividend, small but regular, to its shareholders.

As well as viticultural ingenuity, political ingenuity was required. This often came more easily. The wine trade has never been overstuffed with radicals. "We were all Pétainists," Mme. de Lencquesaing, the current owner of Château Pichon-Lalande, declares; and she seems still to be one. Pétain gave the French a moral excuse; he encouraged self-deception as to German intentions, and he declared business as usual a patriotic duty. In gratitude, the Burgundians created a special Clos du Maréchal vineyard and presented it to the man who offered himself as a buffer between occupier and occupied. Business and euphemism flourished. The official six-volume history of Château Latour contains an impressively quiet sentence about the German conquest and its consequences: "This sudden liveliness in the market for *Grands Vins* was not surprising if one takes into consideration the new conditions arising from the occupation of the Gironde and the northern half of France." In other words, the Nazis wanted top wines, and the French supplied them. A little later, reference is made to the sea blockade of Bordeaux, which prevented any export of wine to neutral countries. "But, apparently paradoxically, the Bordeaux merchants did some very big business. The German market, practically closed to Bordeaux wines for a good ten years, was now open—and all the more widely as it included the occupied territories of Western Europe." This unashamed sentence (not too many orders from the Warsaw ghetto, one imagines) tells us pretty much what we need to know about the French wine business in time of war. According to the secretary of the Bordeaux *Weinführer*, Heinz Bömers, the Bordelais behavior toward him ranged from "absolute commercial cynicism to absolute toadyism."

When pleasure meets war, the normal consequence is collaboration. Pleasure wants to go on having a good time; war wants to claim its spoils. So Maurice Chevalier sings on German-run Radio Paris, Arletty has an affair with a German officer, Fernandel and others make films for the German company Continental. If you cheered up your own people, did it matter if you cheered up a few invaders at the same time? "Collaboration" was intended as a positive word when Vichy first used it to describe a Frenchman's duty. And, after all, isn't pleasure universal, isn't its purpose to transcend difference? Arletty said, "My heart is French, but my arse belongs to the world."

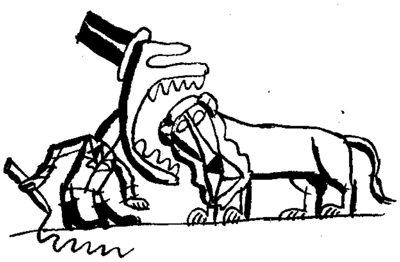
The back cover of "Wine and War" bears a photograph of a cute little French girl handing a bottle of what might be champagne to a liberating G.I. under the watchful eye of a bereted Frenchman from central casting. There is no balancing photo of wine being handed over to the conquerors of 1940. "Resistance," with a few exceptions, consisted of walling up your best wine and putting your worst into bottles marked "Cuvée Wehrmacht." "Collaboration," in the criminal, not Pétainist, sense, seems to have been comparatively rare, or rarely necessary, and even more rarely prosecuted. The flamboyant Bordeaux trader Louis Eschenauer was sentenced to two years in prison for doing overenthusiastic business with the Germans. Doing unenthusiastic business was not a crime.

At the war's end, the French disimmured their hidden wine and drank it with the liberators. The Clos du Maréchal was repossessed and its stone entrance gate dismantled. The wine trade continued its business with Germany on fairer terms. In one surprising gesture of reconciliation, Heinz Bömers became the German agent for Mouton-Rothschild. The German presence left little long-term damage, and even one specific benefit: Alsatian vineyards had been forced to uproot hybrids, thus improving the quality of their wine. Then the French put everything behind them, and learned to say that it was "too early" or "too painful" to discuss the awkward details of the Occupation. (It will be time enough, presumably, only when all the participants are dead.) Wine continues to follow its unhistorical calendar. The gravel beds of the Médoc, which give the claret produced there its essential character, developed over a million years or so; the region's distinctive topography evolved over the next six hundred thousand, while the top dressing of Landes sand blew in over the final two hundred and thirty thousand years. Perhaps the official historian of Château Latour has the correct perspective. When Chamberlain flew to Munich in 1938 to meet Hitler, most of Europe gulped. The view from Latour? "The crisis was fortunately too brief to affect the picking." ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

P.S., *by Helen Schulman (Bloomsbury; $23.95).* Louise Harrington, a divorced graduate-admissions coördinator at Columbia, has replaced the pursuit of love with aerobics, shopping, and watching well-built male students play Frisbee from her office window. It's not a perfect life, but it will do, until she reads the application of one F. Scott Feinstadt, a painter with the same name and birthday as her first love, who died in a car accident. Impulsively, she arranges to meet F. Scott, and the two begin an unlikely—and at times absurd—affair, which threatens Louise's friendships and perhaps her job. Schulman's darkly comedic portrait of searching for romance in a city of jaundiced skeptics is appealingly sharp-tongued, and the novel succeeds best when she relies on humor and physical detail to reveal the deeper currents of Louise's desire for a lover unspoiled by cynicism.

The Assassin, *by Henk Van Woerden, translated from the Dutch by Dan Jacobson (Metropolitan; $23).* In 1966, Hendrik Verwoerd, the Nationalist Prime Minister of South Africa and architect of apartheid, was fatally stabbed by Demitrios Tsafendas, who believed he was instructed to do so by a giant tapeworm in his stomach. Biracial, illegitimate, and rejected by his family, Tsafendas spent the first half of his life in a tragicomedy of statelessness, an aimless odyssey through jobs, countries, and languages. Usually travelling without proper papers, he was repeatedly extradited, imprisoned, and institutionalized. When Van Woerden visits him in a mental hospital, in 1999, shortly before his death, at age eighty-one, the assassin is a disappointment—neither revealingly lucid nor thoroughly mad. But the author persuades us that Tsafendas's mere existence constituted a kind of anti-apartheid, and that in the defining act of his life "the power of madness had . . . shown itself equal to the madness of power."



Brothel, *by Alexa Albert (Random House; $24.95).* In 1993, while applying to medical school, Albert first visited Nevada's famous Mustang Ranch to assess the brothel's safe-sex practices. Her initial response to Nevada's legalized prostitution industry is at once too earnest and too self-conscious, but in subsequent visits the author sets aside her doctor's manner and begins to dig more deeply. Her complex interactions with the Mustang Ranch demimonde—which range from tentative friendships with the women to sessions in which she observes them having sex with clients—challenge her beliefs about feminism, sexuality, and the law. In the end, "Brothel" grapples with some of the most difficult questions about legalized prostitution, including the troubling persistence of pimps and the role of pleasure in the lives of sex workers.

Banvard's Folly, *by Paul Collins (Picador; $25).* Thirteen wry biographical essays about people, once famous, who have disappeared from memory. In 1903, the French physicist René Blondlot was so eager to follow up the recent discovery of X-rays that he discovered N-rays, which do not exist. In the eighteen-forties, the American painter John Banvard gained international celebrity for his painting of the Mississippi River—a panorama which measured over fifteen thousand square feet. And in the seventeen-nineties, when England was suffering a fit of bardolatry, a London lawyer's clerk, William Henry Ireland, began "finding" Shakespeare documents. After these forgeries became collectors' items *as* forgeries, Ireland met the demand by making forgeries of his forgeries, and every line from his pen remains extremely valuable.

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Targeting the young female audiences of summer.

BY DAVID DENBY

In the summer, when teen moviegoing is at its peak, most of the routine "product" seems directed at boys. What about girls? Don't they deserve a few movies as well? On the surface, Rob Cohen's "The Fast and the Furious" is a guy thing: car chases in Los Angeles and lots of violence and emotionally turbulent rivalries in the style of youth-exploitation pictures from forty years ago. This sort of fast-and-furious stuff is always about a group's fervent absorption in some specialized obsession. This time, the kids live for racing souped-up Japanese imports through the streets of Echo Park. Even sex is no big deal. The strongest emotion in the movie is fealty to the gang, and the only possible evil is betrayal. Yet the movie has become so popular that a lot of young women must have wanted to see it, too. What's in it for them? The girls in the movie, including one played by Michelle Rodriguez, seem less interested in romance than in camshafts. Grease monkeys with bare midriffs and combat fatigues—it's the female urban-warrior look—they slide underneath the cars and fool around with the works. The boys and the girls alike are drawn to the gang leader, played by Vin Diesel, the bald, muscular, deep-voiced, and marvellously named new action star. Is Diesel pulling in a female audience? Perhaps not. His thug is too severe and, in youth-gang terms, too morally commanding to be a figure of erotic fantasy. He has important things to think about—Hondas, other gangs, hijackings. For teen-age girls, the love interest in the movie is probably the handsome young cop played by Paul Walker, who infiltrates the group and develops ambiguous loyalties. Walker, who was in "The Skulls," another trashy film directed by Cohen, is tall, blond, and dimly earnest—not individual enough in appearance or manner, I would guess, to become a genuine movie star like Keanu Reeves, who played a similar role a decade ago in a surfer-gang movie called "Point Break." In the never-never land of B movies, however, where turbochargers with nitrous-oxide injection rule, Walker could become a perennial heartthrob.

Parents who have teens at home (I've got two) may have to admit that the pack behavior shown in a movie like "The Fast and the Furious" has some truth to it. This generation of kids seems far more interested in friendship and group loyalty than in pairing off. In such an unromantic era, "Crazy/Beautiful" is rather stirringly old-fashioned: Nicole (Kirsten Dunst) and Carlos (Jay Hernandez), students at a Los Angeles high school, actually fall in love. The twist is that the girl is the messed-up daughter of a rich white liberal congressman (Bruce Davison), and the boy, of Mexican descent, is a working-class straight arrow, devoted to family, good grades, and getting ahead. The two writers, Phil Hay and Matt Manfredi, and the director, John Stockwell, have some serious fun spinning the class and ethnic differences. Carlos's apartment, a two-hour bus ride from the school, is cramped and overcrowded, but Nicole's beautiful house, seemingly made of glass, with light streaming in from all sides, offers even less privacy. Nicole wants to be seen with her lover. Determined to let everyone know how casual she is about sex, she walks past the Latina maid in the kitchen to get a condom stored in a cabinet. She's an unhappy hard drinker who sleeps

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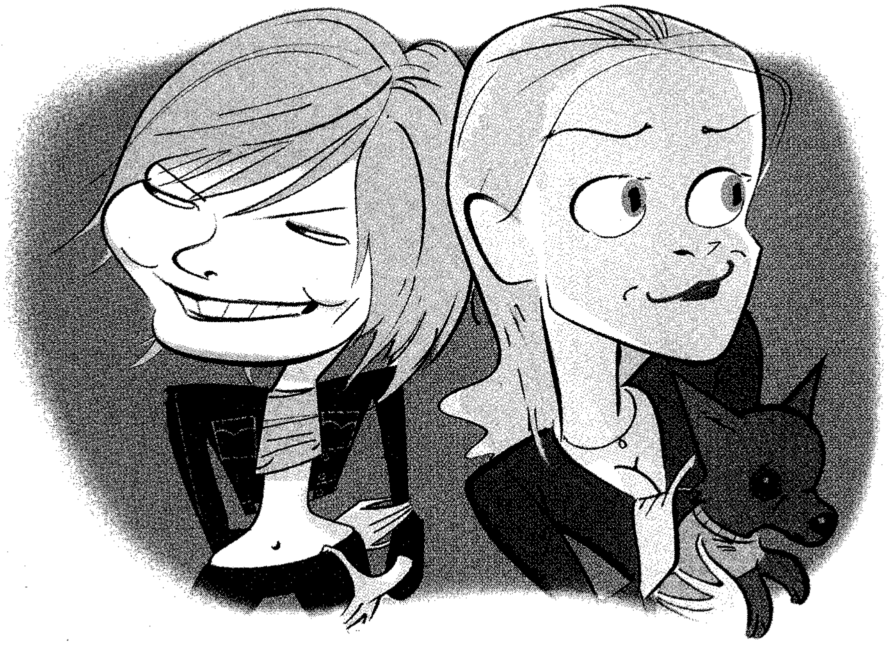
The New Yorker (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for six combined issues: Feb. 19 & 26, Apr. 23 & 30, June 18 & 25, Aug. 20 & 27, Oct. 15 & 22, Dec. 24 & 31) by The Condé Nast Publications Inc. (4 Times Square, N.Y., N.Y. 10036), which is a subsidiary of Advance Publications, Inc. Vol. LXXVII, No. 19, July 16, 2001. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, CO 80328-6447. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

around, and nothing shames her. Jay Hernandez is solid and likable—convincingly grownup—but the movie belongs to nineteen-year-old Kirsten Dunst, who wears stressed jeans and little tops that terminate five inches above her navel. I doubt that any performer has got so much out of an exposed belly since Hedy Lamarr in "Samson and Delilah." Swiveling, jackknifing, raising her arms, and then crumpling over, Dunst has as much intensity as a Martha Graham dancer. When her face falls in alcoholic dismay, she can look like a drowned cat. "Crazy/Beautiful" could have been a little more explicit and a lot wilder. (The director was forced to cut various scenes to get a PG rating.) The movie stays within the limits of teen fantasy (the handsome, penniless boy doesn't push Nicole around or take advantage of her money), and it stays within the limits of family drama, too. But it's honest and touching—a movie that the audience of teen-age girls could watch without feeling it had been thrown a sop.



Kirsten Dunst in "Crazy/Beautiful," and Reese Witherspoon in "Legally Blonde."

ERIC PALMA

If "Legally Blonde," with Reese Witherspoon, is a hit, girls will certainly have made it so. Witherspoon, a talented comedienne, both embodies and parodies one kind of female ideal—the *Cosmo* girl, Lancômed to the hilt. Her character, the fabulous Elle Woods, lives in a swank Los Angeles college sorority (she's the prez), surrounded by friends who idolize her. But disaster strikes: Elle's boyfriend (Matthew Davis), who's headed for Harvard Law School, throws her over, and she collapses into bed with a box of chocolates. The movie is openly dedicated to the *Cosmopolitan* ethos, and, sure enough, Witherspoon turned up on the cover of the July issue, in a Dolce & Gabbana dress, with one hand demurely laid across her breast. Witherspoon is on the diminutive side, but it's all there—the cleavage, the look, the skin, the refulgent big hair (spritzed, we are told, and then blow-dried, curled, and sprayed). In the movie, Elle achieves perfection, of a sort, in the face of constant failure, and both her ambitions and her fears seem to come right out of the magazine. The July issue offers confidence-building tips ("Feel Sexier Naked—Now"), but on a nearby page, right after surefire methods for bagging "studs" and "hotties," there are more anxieties than can be found in all of "Fear and Trembling." Health crises loom everywhere: cold sores, bikini-line breakouts. Terrifying questions are posed: "Are your breasts unbalanced?" "Is it bad to wash my face during a hot shower?" The magazine seems eager to trap women in a perpetual limbo of desire and fear.

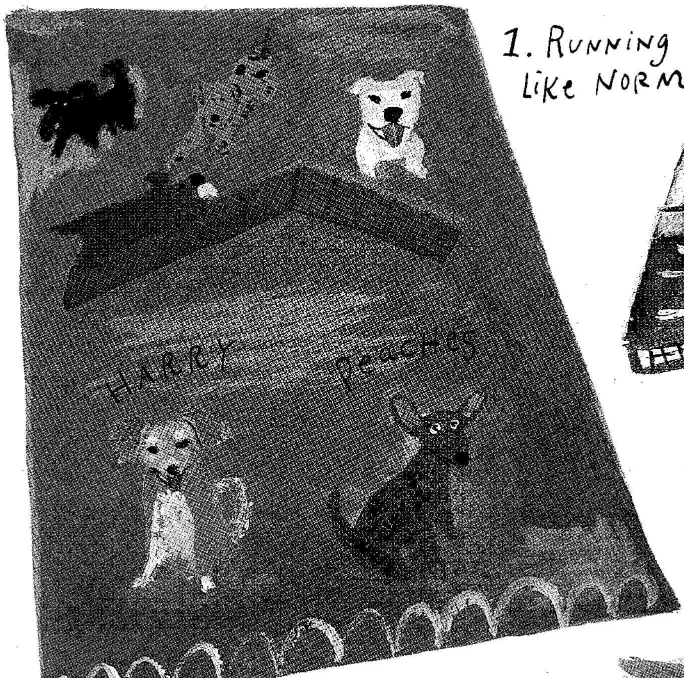
"Legally Blonde" wants to be a comedy that triumphs over all these terrors, even the face-washing conundrum. Is there anything a *Cosmo* girl with a proper foundation can't lick? For a while, I thought the movie was going to be terrific, even a rival to the wonderful "Clueless" as a testament to the indomitable spirit of a Bel Air princess. ("I grew up across the street from Aaron Spelling," Elle says, explaining her pedigree.) The first-time director Robert Luketic displays a talent for candied artifice and gentle parody. The scenes in the sorority are so stylized they could be out of an old M-G-M musical, with pink-on-pink décor and squealing girls. But "Legally Blonde" subsides quickly into trivial farce. In order to win back her boyfriend, Elle gamely fights her way into Harvard Law. The initial scenes are funny—she arrives on campus wearing leather and holding a Chihuahua. Perky and cheerful, she doesn't hear the insults from the militant frumps all around her. We're with the movie in spirit—*Cosmo* trumps Langdell Hall!—but the screenwriters, Karen McCullah Lutz and Kirsten Smith, have set the bar too low. They've made nearly everyone at Harvard a jerk or a phony; the students and profs don't even seem bright, and they're too easily confounded by Elle, who triumphs without betraying the principles of *Cosmo* wisdom. The story, including a murder trial, is so sitcom obvious that it's not worth criticizing, and the hostility that Elle encounters doesn't make much sense, anyway: a girl who showed up at the law school resplendent in pink would cause an immediate sensation. She wouldn't be hated and mocked; the most entitled snobs at Harvard have always loved irony.

In the end, the movie is worth seeing only for Reese Witherspoon, a brilliant corsage bobbing in junk-strewn waters. Witherspoon has a bulldog lower lip and a fighting spirit, yet she's not afraid to be silly. The best thing she's ever appeared in remains the 1999 satire "Election," in which she turned a ruthless high-school student-body president into a scary cross between Pat Nixon and Martha Stewart. In "Legally Blonde," Witherspoon suggests that a girl emerging from a cold-cream jar might nevertheless have the command of a warrior. She doesn't really vanquish Harvard in the movie, but she inadvertently shows up *Cosmo*, becoming a woman more sane than anything that the weirdly schizoid magazine could possibly imagine. ♦

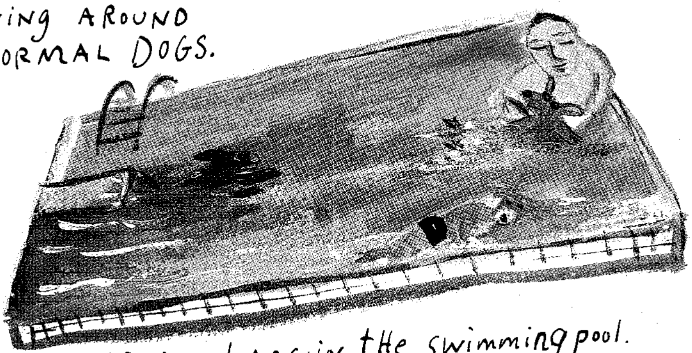
THE BACK PAGE BY MAIRA KALMAN

SYBARITIC DOGS IN SENSATIONAL SPA (A TRUE STORY)

When two heartbreakingly sweet street urchins, Harry and Peaches, were rescued by kind souls—literally snatched from the jaws of death—it was a true rags-to-riches story. Now, when they are not being whisked off to the Hamptons (clean fur flying), they are frolicking in a five-story dog spa, called Biscuits & Bath, that would make any human salivate. I don't know what your dog does on Fridays, but Harry (who was adopted by Isaac Mizrahi) and Peaches (who was adopted by the gallery owner Dickie Desroche) get to choose from:



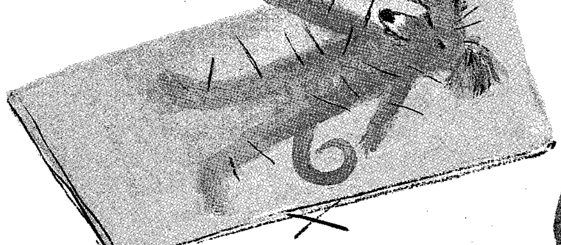
1. Running around like normal dogs.



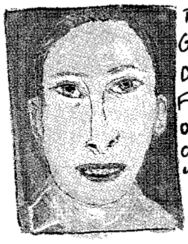
2. Doing Laps in the swimming pool.

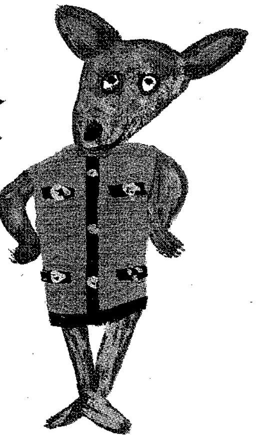
3. Getting hydrotherapy for the odd tennis injury.

(Some dogs are snobs. What can you do?)

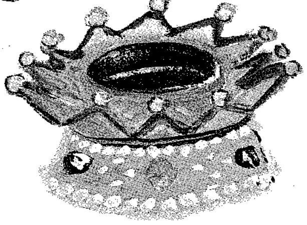


4. Getting acupuncture if hydrotherapy doesn't work, administered by the gentle Dr. Frishman of the gentle red hair.

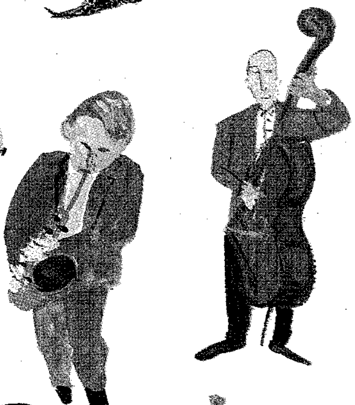


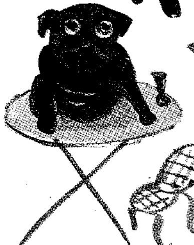


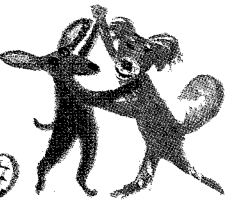
5. Shopping for faux Chanel sweaters or a princely dog bowl.



(I signed up my dog Pete. How could I not?)

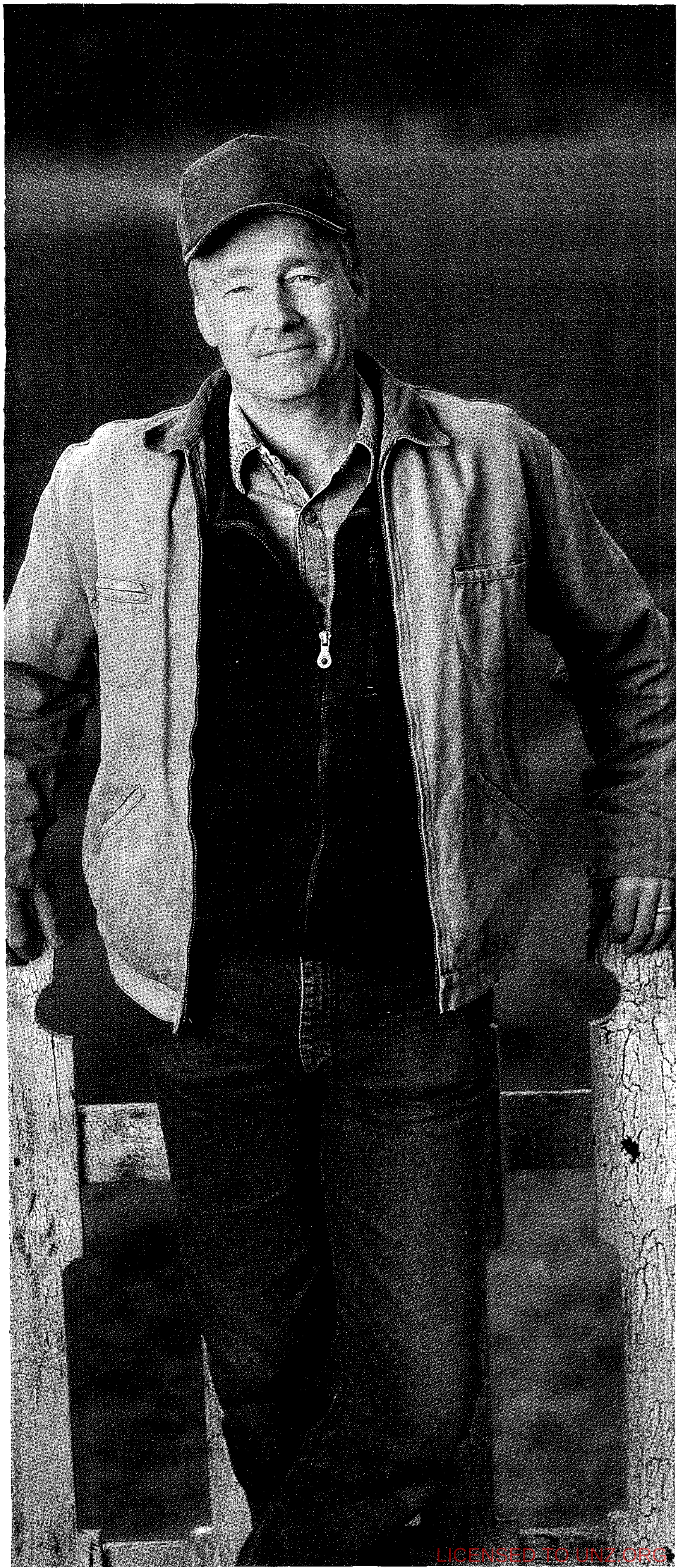






6. Just kicking back and listening to some damn fine jazz in the café.

(Some dogs are inexplicable)



Biotechnology is helping him protect the land and preserve his family's heritage.

"I'm raising a better soybean crop that helps me conserve the topsoil, keep my land productive and help this farm support future generations of my family."
—Rod Gangwish, farmer

Biotechnology is helping Rod Gangwish to grow a type of soybean that requires less tilling of the soil. That helps him preserve precious topsoil and produce a crop with less impact on the land. Preserving topsoil today means a thriving farm for generations to come.

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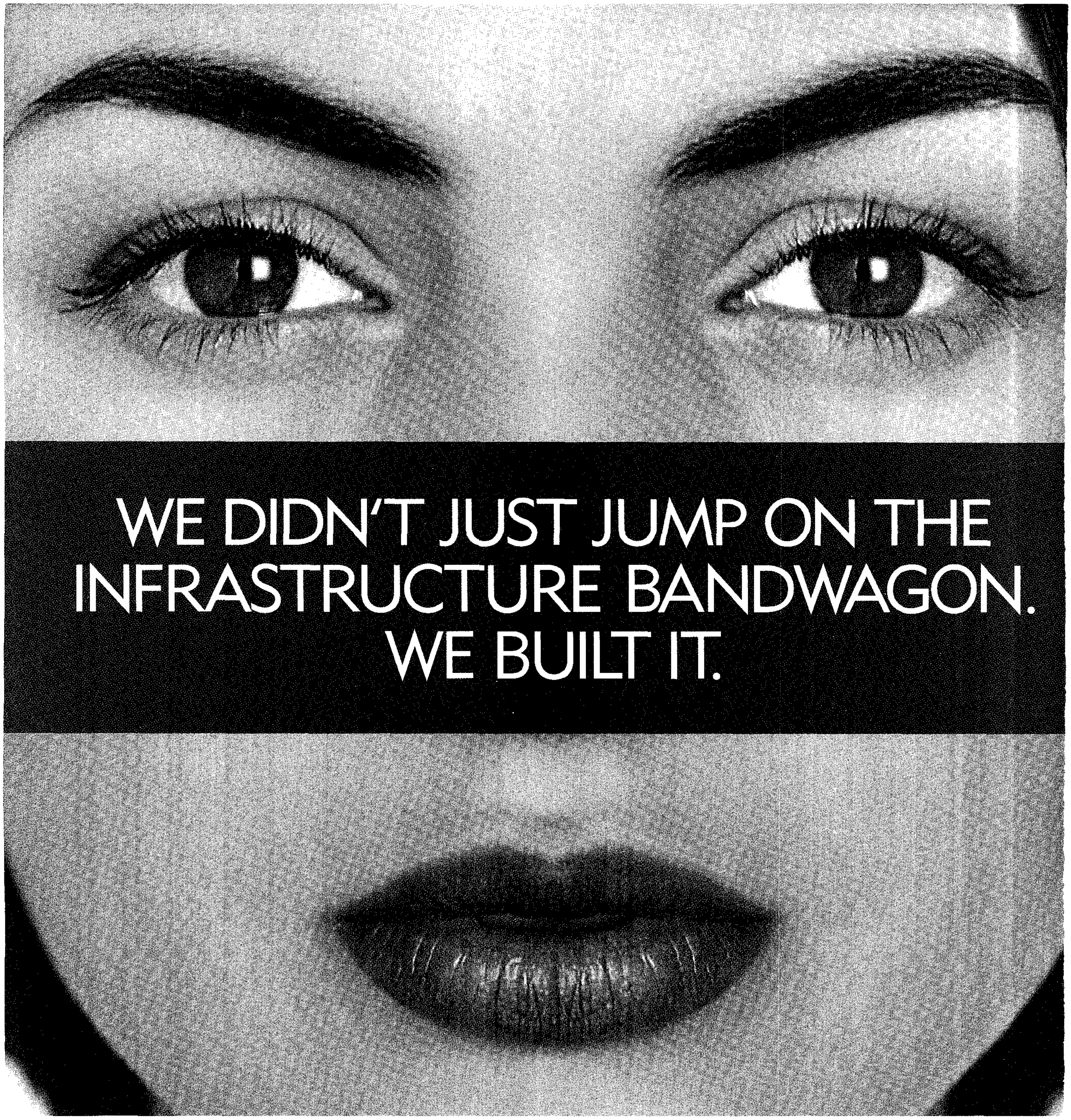
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